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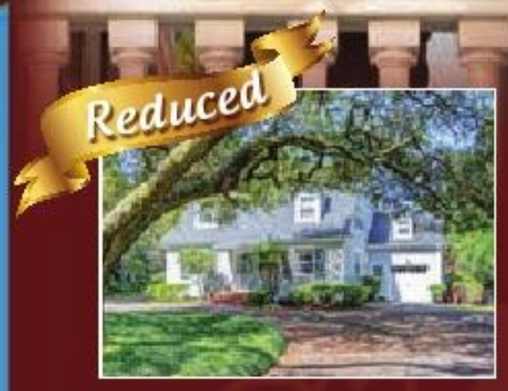

1726 Fairway Drive — *Country Club Terrace*

Classic South Oleander home in one of Wilmington's most desirable, established neighborhoods. This house sits towards the end of a tree lined, cul-de-sac and backs up to the 11th fairway of Cape Fear Country Club's golf course. Offers hardwood floors throughout both levels, a formal living room with masonry fireplace, formal dining room, a study with antique heart of pine paneling, and a large family room with wainscoting and a bay window overlooking the sloping back yard and golf course. It is within walking distance of Cape Fear Country Club and is close to New Hanover Regional Medical Center, downtown, and shopping. **$524,900**

5032 Nicholas Creek Circle — *Masonboro Forest*

This spacious home is in the heart of sought-after Masonboro Forest. Enter through its soaring 2 story foyer and on to the great room which boasts custom built-in bookcases and television cabinet above a gas fire place and cathedral ceiling. The kitchen offers granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, lovely cherry stained cabinets, and breakfast bar. A separate breakfast area leads to a deck and large screened porch overlooking the secluded back yard. Hardwood floors throughout both levels, 4 bedrooms, 4 full baths, and a huge FROG. Substantial first floor master bedroom has a tray ceiling, large walk-in closet, full tile bath with double vanities, separate shower and whirlpool tub. Home office/study on the first floor could be a fifth bedroom and has an adjoining full bath. Neighborhood offers a sizeable clubhouse, pool, and tennis courts and is centrally located. **$485,000**

2290 Bella Coola Road — *Lake Waccamaw*

Exceptional, panoramic views!! This striking home offers lakefront living at it's finest. Superior views abound from all livings areas. Situated on a high, elevated lot, the home boasts an open airy floor plan with an updated kitchen. The split 4 bedroom plan allows everyone space to spread out. Lake Waccamaw is located just 30 minutes from Wilmington and is an outstanding escape from the busy, hurried life of the city. Perfect family retreat for fishing, skiing, sailing, wakeboarding, or just relaxing. Given this unique property is all on one level, it is perfect for retirement living too! **$575,000**

2614 Columbia Avenue — *Forest Hills*

This exceptionally well maintained all brick home offers one floor living and low maintenance. This 3 bedroom 2.5 bath home is nestled on a quiet street in the heart of desirable Forest Hills. The open flowing floor plan offers 9 foot ceilings throughout, hardwood floors in all living areas, formal living and dining room. The kitchen is open to the breakfast area and den which has beautiful heart of pine floors, custom built-in cabinets, bookcases and true masonry wood burning fireplace. The master offers a large walk-in closet, garden tub, separate shower, and dual vanities. The large finished bonus room upstairs is perfect for an office, study, or heated and cooled storage. Other features of this home include, large tile laundry room, double garage, new hot water heater, new irrigation well and pump, and two recent heat pumps. All living areas open to the spacious covered back porch overlooks lush mature landscaping that offers privacy. Neighborhood has tree-lined streets and is located near Cape Fear Country Club, New Hanover Regional Medical Center, downtown, and shopping. **$365,000**

617 Elfin Court — *WestPort*

This 2 bedroom 2 full bath townhouse is the perfect place to call home. This home offers a freshly painted interior and brand new carpet. Kitchen, baths and laundry room are ceramic tile. Spend your evenings relaxing on the rear screened-in porch, overlooking the pond. HOA dues cover all yard and exterior maintenance. Motivated seller! **$110,000**

293 Ennett Lane — *Sneads Ferry*

Custom built home centered on a beautifully landscaped 2-acre property. Home boasts a gourmet kitchen featuring stainless steel appliances and granite countertops. Living room is anchored by a grand fireplace and leads outdoors to a 12x18 screened porch. The home is elegantly appointed with hardwood floors and recessed lighting throughout. Entertain your guests in the formal dining room or visit them on the 39x23 deck overlooking the garden. The master suite is custom designed with a walk in closet. You'll immediately notice the superior design of the master bath expertly finished with dual vanities, garden tub and separate shower. A three car garage rounds out this excellent value. **$288,937**

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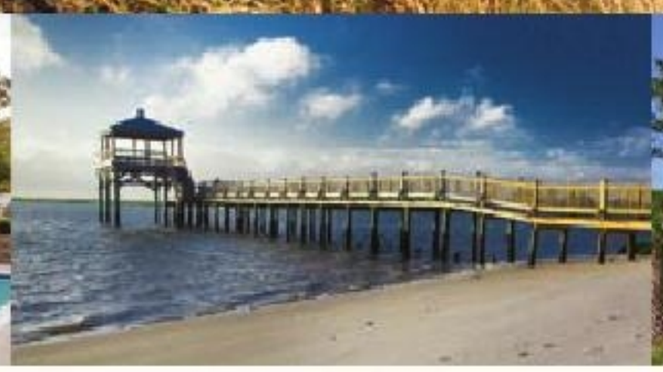

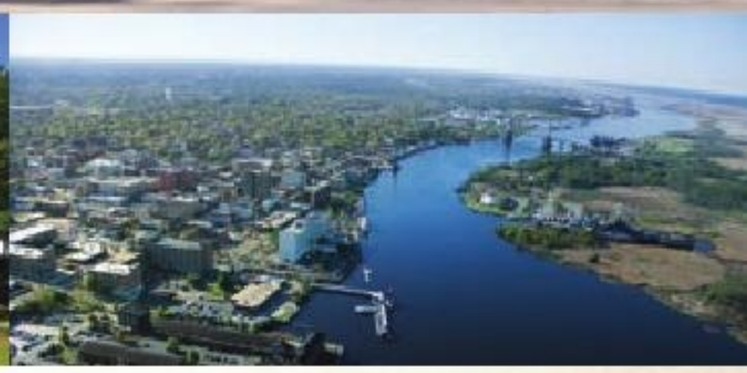

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MAGAZINE

VOLUME 2, NO. 10

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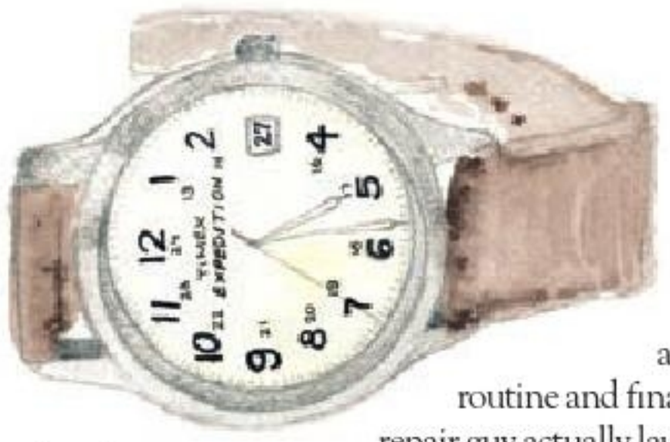
About Time



By Jim Dodson

Not long ago, the watch I've worn for several years began mysteriously keeping unreliable time. Every time I glanced at it, the durn thing seemed to be slower — fifteen minutes here, half an hour there, eventually more than a full hour slow. Soon it stopped keeping time altogether.

I took it to a local watch shop, figuring all it needed was a new battery. But it wasn't the battery.

"This watch is shot," the repairman said. "You might say it just ran out of time." Funny boy.

The loss wasn't all that big a deal. It was, after all, an inexpensive wristwatch — some might say cheap — a simple Timex "Expedition" model that set me back only about fifty bucks during a two-for-one Black Friday sale at Belk department store four years ago.

For the record, I kept one and gave one to my college-boy son, who as it happens had just broken the fine Swiss Army watch I'd owned for several years but passed along to him for safekeeping.

My history of watch-ownership, you see, is a rather checkered affair, littered with various costly broken or missing timepieces, beginning with the beautiful engraved Seiko chronometer my parents gave me for college graduation that went off to Europe and never came back. Over the next few decades this was followed by a succession of fine watches and several Swiss Army numbers I either managed to break or lose in creative ways.

That's why the first Timex Expedition I happened upon over a decade ago was such a Eureka moment: simple, handsome, rugged, reliable and cheap to replace when the inevitable happened — meant to take a licking and keep on ticking, as the company's famous slogan went.

Moreover, it was a nostalgic window into my childhood, conjuring memories of the iconic Timex TV spots I always found so entertaining during which John Cameron Swayze — former news broadcaster and game show panelist — subjected Timex watches to various creative "torture tests" like being sent over Niagara Falls in a barrel, attached to the churning blades a of speeding boat motor, put through a washing machine, and worn by slugger Mickey Mantle in batting practice.

Timex was the flagship of American-made watches. These stunts made it America's best-selling watch brand in the dawning space age before digital everything, bargain priced between $9.95 and $16.99.

The first Timex Expedition I bought lasted five years and quite literally vanished on a book research trip to Africa, aptly while wading across a river where crocodiles were known to live. Somehow the pin holding the watch to the strap slipped out and I found my arm bare on the other side. I chose not to go back in and hunt for it, picturing the croc in *Peter Pan* with the clock in his stomach.

The second Expedition I owned lasted until just weeks ago when, as I say, it started doing its wacky start-and-stop routine and finally quit running altogether. The aforementioned watch repair guy actually laughed when I asked how much it would be to repair it. "You could buy two new ones for the cost of the repair," he said.

So one afternoon I set off to various shops and department stores looking for the same model, figuring that any watch that gave me such loyal service for essentially ten bucks a year was a small price to pay for being on time.

At Belk I was dismayed to learn the store no longer carries Timexes. "I think it's gone a little down-market," was how the watch counter clerk politely termed it, offering to show me some much higher priced Bulova and Seiko models, also something called a Fossil watch that looked like I might need platform heels and a pair of glittery oversized Elton John eyeglasses to complete the ensemble. The only watch even remotely resembling my beloved broken Expedition number was a handsome Citizen timepiece three times its cost — with a ten-year warranty included.

I thanked the clerk for her time and said I had my heart set on another Timex Expedition.

"You might try Walmart," she said.

So I did, sad to think how far mighty Timex watches had fallen. They'd taken a licking, were they still even ticking? Even Walmart was a no-go. The clerk there said a drugstore was my best option. If that failed, I guessed America's formerly favorite watch might be found on the street being sold from suitcases by vendors with strange accents.

Perhaps, you are saying to yourself, what a big waste of time — this urban expedition for a cheap wristwatch. And you're probably right.

Time is, they say, our most precious commodity, a fleeting resource, tomorrow's memory.

Time flies but is a sin to waste. It's a wise counselor but sometimes a fool's errand.

Time stays, we go — or so said H.L. Mencken.

Whatever else is true, as anyone from a stockbroker to an arms merchant can flatly tell you, time is money.

It heals all wounds and — if we're lucky — wounds all heels.

How long a minute lasts, some wag once said, depends on which side of the bathroom door you're standing.

You can save time by taking the short cut, and lose it by mistakenly doing the same thing.

The Book of Ecclesiastes says there is a time under heaven for everything, a time to reap and a time to sow; a time to be born and a time to die.

My late Grandmother Taylor used to tell me "someone is always waiting beneath a clock." For the longest time I had no idea what this meant.

What she meant was that time is personal. Someone is always waiting beneath an unseen clock for a baby to be born or an elder to pass away, a first date to arrive, a train to leave the station. We wait for the weather to change, the season to shift, a new life to begin.

ILLUSTRATION BY KIRA SCHOENFELDER

In time the rain will stop, the movie will start, Christmas will return, spring shall commence, tomorrow will eventually get here.

But tomorrow is simply an unspent yesterday — an abstract concept for something that's gone the instant after it arrives, whereas real time is always here and now, which explains why we fragile human beings felt the need to come up with so many mechanical constructions — Stonehenge, sun dials, planting cycles, moon phases, hourglasses, various kinds of calendars, latitude and longitude, and every sort of time-keeping piece from ancient Babylonian water clocks to modern Tag Heuer chronometers — simply to measure our days and mark our passages through the veil of existence.

For years whenever I was doing something I really loved doing — working in my garden, taking a swim, dining with friends or even playing golf — I would unstrap my watch and toss it in a pocket, a symbolic act of suspending time or at least removing my spirit for a blissful while from the gravitational pull of a world that would have me doing more responsible and important things with my time, like replying to emails or fixing a broken door, though the older I've gotten — time being the source of wisdom — I've come to believe most of the time real time's value is whatever we choose to make of it.

Sometimes "time" is purely nostalgia-driven. We hear a song that takes us back to freshman year in college or see a photo of our infant children on a beach — astonished to think how quickly time passes.

Once, poking around London's famous Portobello marketplace one Sunday morning with my wife, I happened upon a vendor selling vintage restored watches, instantly zeroing in on a handsome 1945 Rolex watch engraved with the symbol of the American Eighth Army Air Force. The beautiful timepiece instantly made me think about my father, who'd passed away not long before. He'd served in the Eighth Army Air Force on the Lancashire Coast just before D-Day. My dad had his own thing about watches. For all I know this watch could have been his.

It could have been mine, too, were I willing to shell out the 220 pounds sterling the vendor was asking. I was sorely tempted but reluctantly declined — and spent that whole evening regretting my decision.

At the end of this month, as the days grow visibly shorter — actually, to be more precise, a mere two days into November — we here in North America will gain an extra hour of sleep on the clock when we "fall back" from Daylight Saving Time to Eastern Standard Time, yet another artificial construction dating from the end of the 19th century designed to provide more daylight hours for human activities and less waking time spent in morning darkness.

A natural early riser since boyhood, I've long rallied against a sun that doesn't set until after 8 o'clock, something my body clock rebels against and critics say really doesn't save all that much time and energy anyway.

As for this weary time traveler, by the time we fall back and enjoy that extra hour of autumn snooze time, I'll have a new Timex Expedition watch strapped to my wrist and off on another five-year expedition.

That's because following my fruitless watch-hunt around town, a pragmatic lady I'm married to suggested that I simply go online and order one directly from the company.

"You'll wind up saving money *and* time," she said.

Happy to report, she was right. I found the current version of my old familiar Expedition model and even paid ten bucks less than the department store version of five years ago.

It's on my wrist as I write this, keeping track of my remaining minutes before I'm supposed to be somewhere else.

Someday, I suppose, assuming the past is anything like the future, it will begin to slow down and eventually give out. Then again, so will its owner.

For the moment at least, we're happy to take that extra hour of sleep and spend time together.

Contact editor Jim Dodson at jim@saltmagazinenc.com.

"I LEFT MY HOME TOWN AND FOUND A HOME AWAY FROM HOME."

Stephanie S., *11th grade*

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Nice Set of Pipes

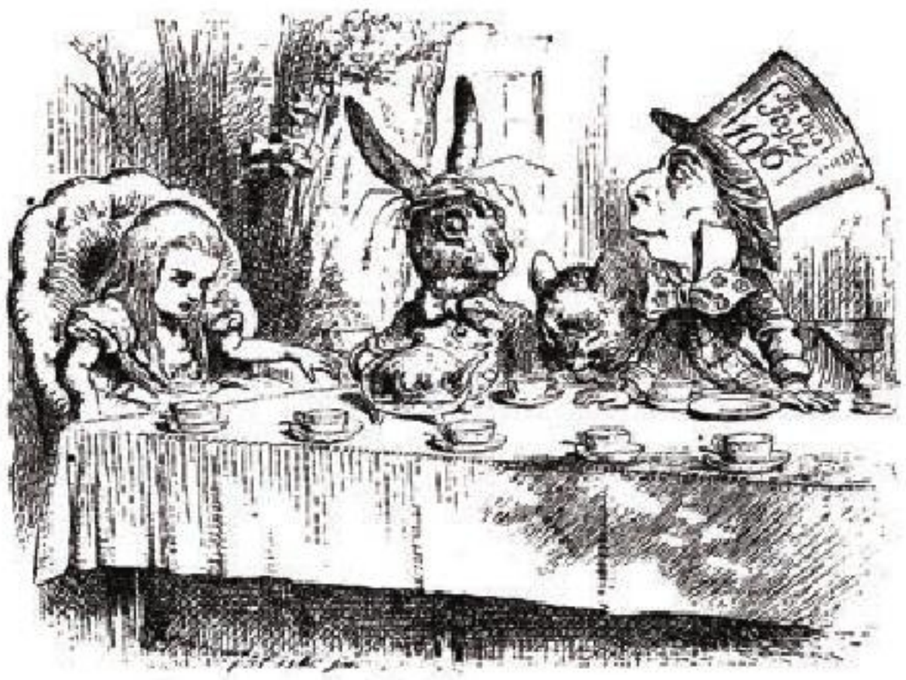
On Sunday, October 12, 4 p.m., Opera Wilmington presents "Aria Night", an evening of arias, duets and small ensembles performed in their original languages. Operatic selections include "Vissi d'arte," "Nessun dorma", "O mio babbino caro," the Flower Duet from *Lakmé*, and the famous quartet from Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Among the talent: Opera Wilmington's Artistic Director Nancy King, Michael Rallis, Carl Samet, Sara Westermark, Lynne Boney, David N. Williams, and April Evans of the Metropolitan Opera. Tickets: $30 (include champagne reception during intermission); $10 for students and children. Beckwith Recital Hall, 270 Randall Drive, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 962-3500 or www.opera-wilmington.org.

It's the Great Pumpkin, Y'all

October Corn Maze Days at Legacy Farms are worth the drive. We're talking hayrides, haunted woods trail, pumpkin patch, farm games, animals, garden tours and face painting — wholesome fun for the whole family from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. But when darkness falls, the farm is wet-your-pants scary. In other words: Phone the sitter and prepare to scream your brains out. Family-friendly farm dates are October 4, 5, 11, 18 and 25. Haunted Halloween happens Fridays and Saturday nights, October 10–25, plus Thursday, October 30, through Saturday, November 1. Admission: $8. Legacy Farms, 7494 Highway 41 West, Wallace. Info: (910) 805-3276 or www.legacyfarmsevents.com.

Take Me to the River

Round here, October means Riverfest, the rain-or-shine riverside street fair that brings live entertainment and general merriment to downtown Wilmington for three glorious, action-filled days. Highlights include the Riverfront concert series, beer garden, arts and crafts, antique and classic car shows, firework displays, pirate treasure hunts, rowing regattas, garden party at Greenfield Lake, Run the River 8K and stand-up paddle board races. Free admission. See website for complete list of events and locations. Info: www.wilmingtonriverfest.com.



#Awesome

Call us old-fashioned, but we at *Salt* happen to enjoy toting around real books, scribbling ditties in our soft bound journals and experiencing our monthly glossy in the flesh rather than through our smart phone screens. Not that there's anything wrong with the alternative. Then again, all those pop-up alerts and "incoming text" notifications can become so distracting that they all but consume you. Which is sort of the premise of Superstar Academy's *#Alice*, a comedic and contemporary spin on *Alice in Wonderland* written and directed specifically for kids by Zach Hanner. Lost in the operating system of her smart phone, young Alice must navigate her way through various perils with the help of apps like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Performances run Thursday, October 2 through Sunday, October 5. Tickets: $12. Proceeds benefit the Superstar Academy, a 501c3 nonprofit organization whose goal is to provide acting instruction to area youth at low or no cost. See website for showtimes. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 262-2245 or www.superstaracademy.org. #downtherabbithole #don'tmissit #pleaseturnoffyourcellphone

British Invasion

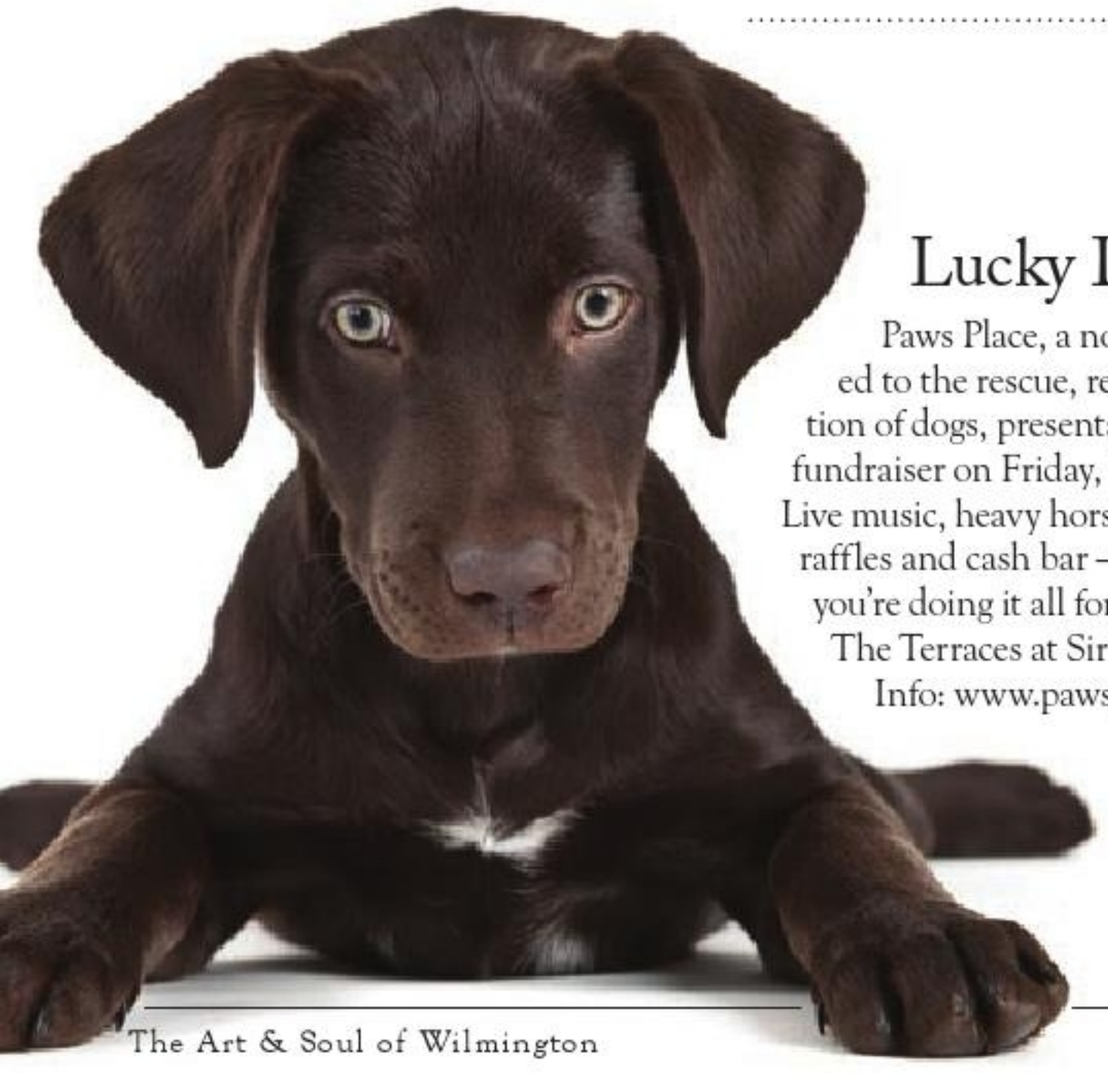
Brits at the Beach, the premier British car show of the southeast, is here again. But the British Motor Club of the Cape Fear insists that this year will be the best show yet. Why? Because it coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the British Invasion, of course. On Saturday, October 11, expect live music, raffles, on-site food vendors and a host of British models with curves in all the right places — but don't expect to leave without having relived your youth. Proceeds benefit local charities. See website for registration and complete schedule of events. Rock 'n' roll, folks. Wrightsville Beach Show Field, 321 Causeway Drive. Info: bmccf.org.

League of Extraordinary Hornblowers

If you can imagine a tiny carnival cavorting around the inside of your mouth, then you probably know what it's like to spend Wednesday evenings at the Cameron Art Museum, where the tapas menu at CAM Café boasts a selection of savory creations that are almost too dainty to eat. Like the fried chickpeas seasoned with smoked paprika and sea salt. Or the chorizo-laced quail eggs served sunny-side-up on toasted baguettes. Or the prosciutto-wrapped medjool dates. And if you happen to go on Wednesday, October 22, you're in for an extra special treat: a tiny carnival on wheels known as the Rural Academy Theater, whose horse-pulled tour stops at CAM from 7–8:30 p.m. for an old-timey performance beneath the glittering night sky. "It's like something straight out of *Pippi Longstocking*," says executive chef Jessica Cabo, who served the troupe hot cocoa when they made their stop last year. Expect a little bit of everything: puppets, clowns, horn blowers, magicians and ballad-warblers, plus a post-show screening of Georges Méliès' 1902 classic silent film, *A Trip to the Moon*, accompanied by live klezmer and traditional Appalachian music by The Rural Academy Orkestar. Tickets are $10; $5 for children age 12 and under. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

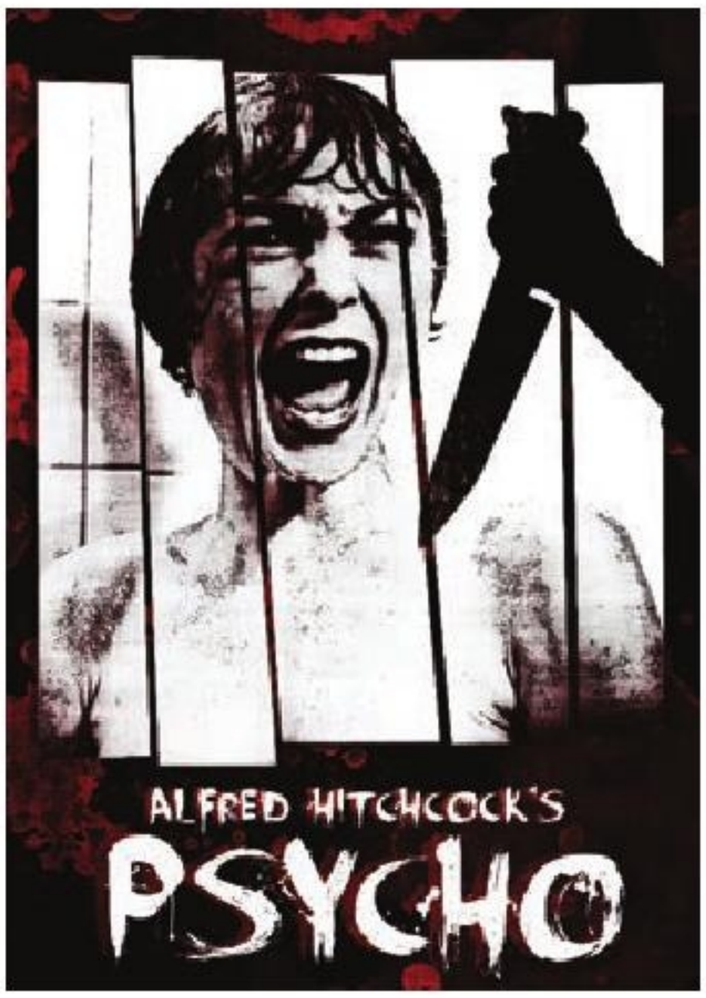
Champagne on the Docks, Anyone?

Modeled after "Rendezvous in Monaco," the glamorous annual "yachting life" celebration that draws superyacht owners from the world over to the French Riviera, the Children's Museum of Wilmington presents YachtVenture, an over-the-top fundraiser that allows guests to board and experience various luxury yachts. Includes delectable food, cigars and spirits plus unbelievable silent auction and raffle items and live music by L-Shape Lot. Cocktail attire, darlings. Tickets: $100/advance; $125. MarineMax, 130 Short Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.yachtventure.org or www.playwilmington.org.



Lucky Dogs

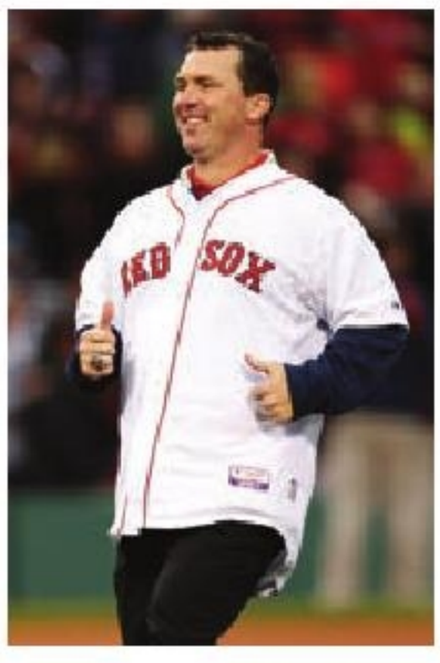
Paws Place, a no-kill sanctuary dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and adoption of dogs, presents a "Raise the Ruff" fundraiser on Friday, October 10, at 7 p.m. Live music, heavy hors d'oeuvres, auctions, raffles and cash bar – and just to think, you're doing it all for the dogs. Tickets: $40. The Terraces at Sir Tyler, Wilmington. Info: www.pawsplace.org.



Pass the Popcorn

What better way to spend Halloween night than watching back-to-back horror film screenings on the grounds of a haunted antebellum mansion? Yeah, we couldn't think of one either. On Friday, October 31, 7 p.m., see Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kathy Najimy as the Sanderson Sisters in the 1993 cult classic *Hocus Pocus*, followed by Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 horror-thriller, *Psycho*. Bring blankets, chairs and coolers; snacks and beverages available for purchase. Admission: $5. Talk about cheap date. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

Peanuts and Crackerjacks



New Hanover High School alum and former Boston Red Sox right fielder Trot Nixon will be the keynote speaker at this year's Picnic with Purpose luncheon to benefit Wilmington Health Access for Teens (WHAT), a community-based nonprofit that provides convenient, affordable health care for adolescents and young adults ages 11–24. Accessibility is the name of the game. Grand slam happens Thursday, October 9, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Blockade Runner Beach Resort, 275 Waynick Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 790-9949 or www.whatswhat.org.

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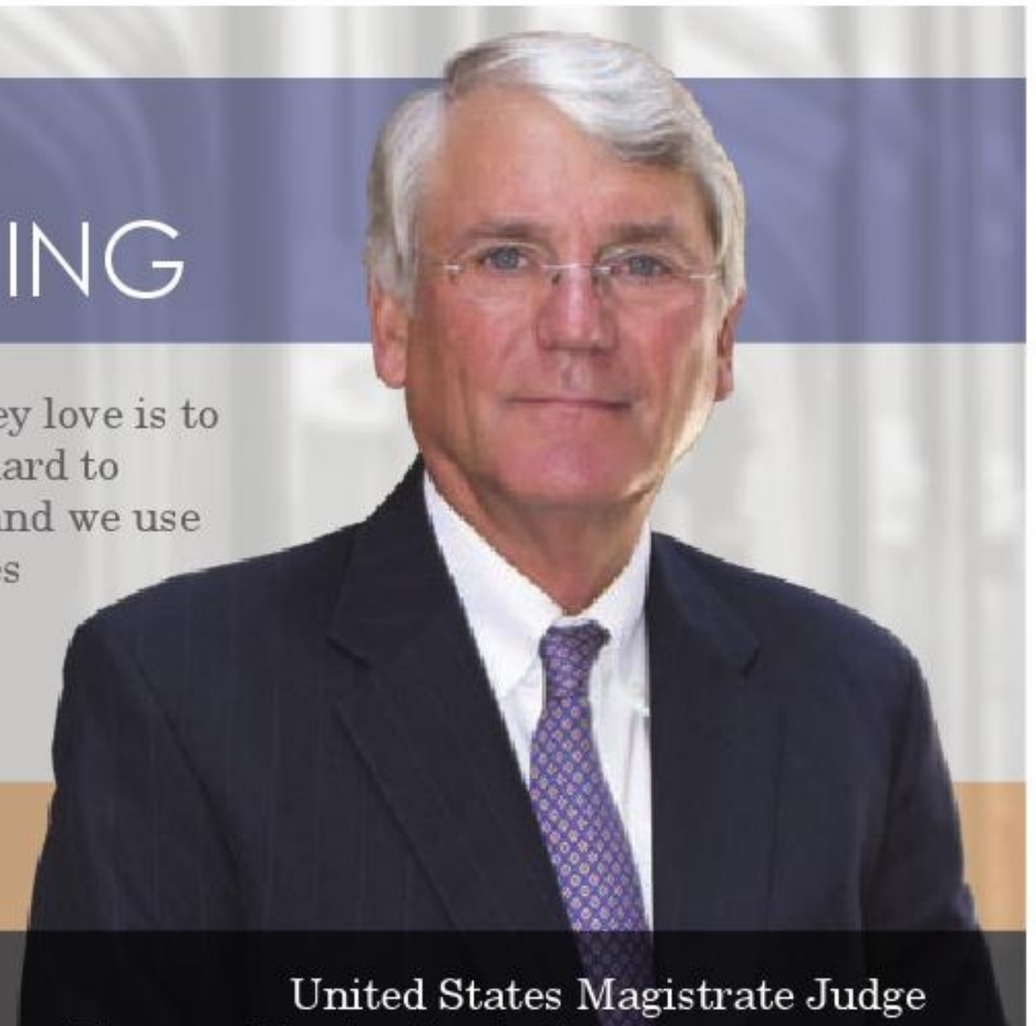

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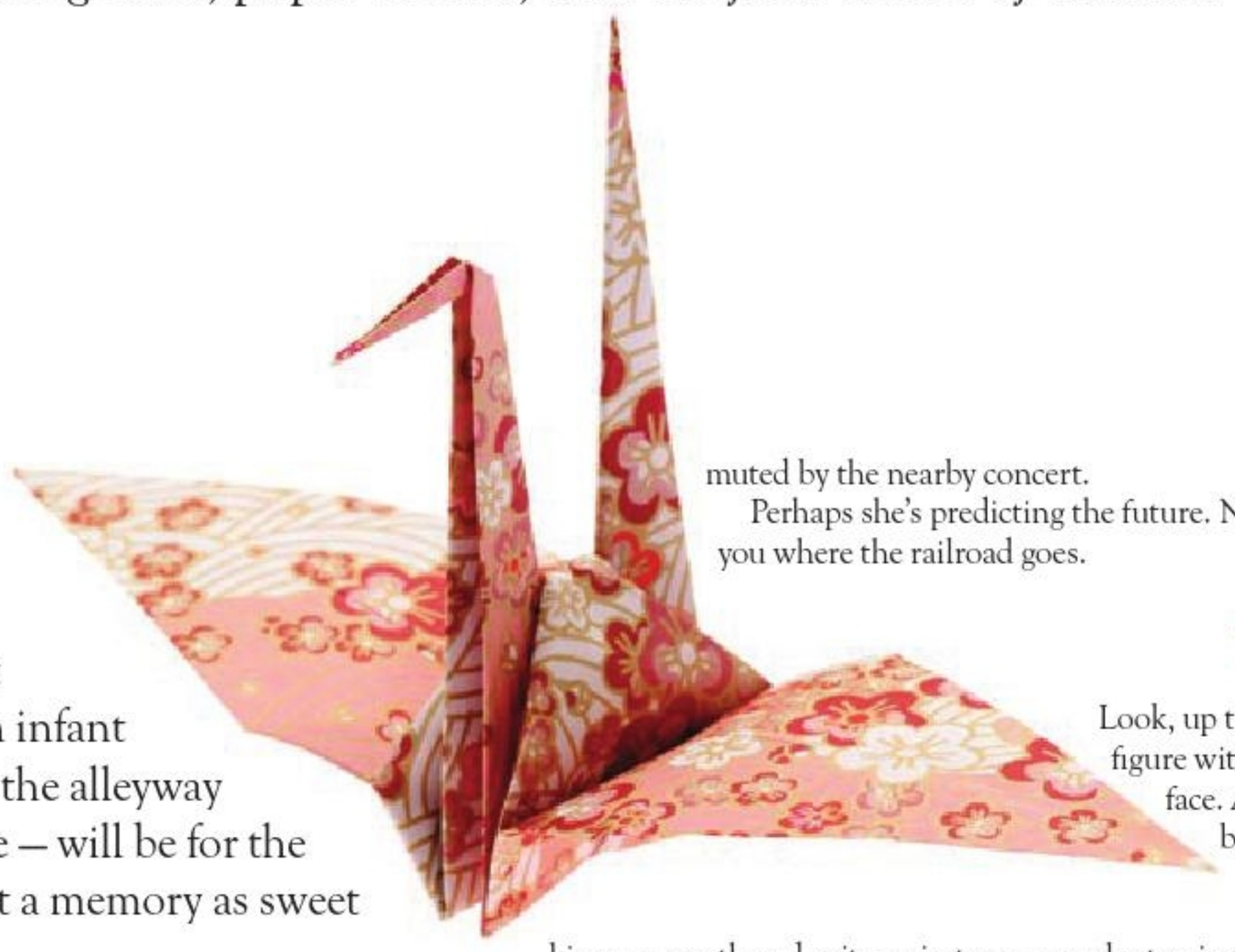
A Living Kaleidoscope

A haunted geisha, paper cranes, and the final dance of summer



By Ashley Wahl

By the time

you read this, summer will have vanished. August's last watermelon — carried like an infant down Front Street, through the alleyway and up the rickety fire escape — will be for the woman in the loft apartment a memory as sweet as it is impalpable.

The air smells like fallen leaves, but if you stand on the corner of Market and Water, where the evening sunlight dances across the green glass jaws of downtown's towering flytrap, you can still hear the echoes of a late summer concert. And when you do, perhaps you'll flash back to tonight, where *you* are a piece of colored glass and downtown is an ever-shifting landscape — like the view inside a living kaleidoscope.

*

It's a sweltering Friday evening in late August. Seventies funk music blasts from the Riverfront Stage, and a small crowd has gathered on the nearby Riverwalk round a jerry-built canvas the size of a castle door. A spunky woman with an impish grin untwists a paintbrush from her crest of silvery hair and tucks it into the back of her loose-fitting pants. Could be Karola Lüttringhaus, founder of the Sarus Festival for site-specific and experimental art. She's built like a dancer: lean, fit, pixie-esque. Like the others — the tow-headed boy with the cello, the girl in the olive-colored Toms — the artist wears all black.

All at once, the performance begins. The boy picks up his bow, the girl in Toms dances as if under water, and the pixie woman sprays black paint across the surface of the white canvas as if it were a moving boxcar. With the Downtown Sundown concert happening not fifty yards away, watching this work — "Amalgamation of Art" — is like watching a silent film.

Eyes on the cellist, the painter adds fluid swirls of scarlet paint to the canvas, her brush like a whirling dervish spinning toward enlightenment. When the bow moves *rapido*, she hammers out mad yellow dashes like railroad ties leading to the ether. The dancer interprets the paint.

A fourth performer — she's been here the whole time, still as a heron — watches the colors shift shapes on the canvas. Her lips move, but her song is muted by the nearby concert.

Perhaps she's predicting the future. No doubt she could tell you where the railroad goes.

*

Look, up the street, at the robed figure with the powder-white face. As the androgynous being dawdles down the sidewalk — a lost soul in a green kimono, weathered suitcase in tow — people stop in their tracks.

At first glance, the performance looks like a scene from *The Walking Dead*. But when the haunted geisha sets down the luggage, most avoid eye contact. During these moments, the performer reaches into a silk handbag and retrieves a perfect origami crane like the one fixed on top of her — his? — head. As a symbol of peace, each paper bird is silently offered as a gift to someone on the street. Few are taken.

The performer is an international artist named Richard Breuil. Like poetry, the beauty of the performance exists in the silence and mystery — and how the public responds.

"That's too far-out for me," mutters one of the spectators.

The geisha shuffles past, steps out in front of a car on the cul-de-sac and stands still. He takes out a crane, holds it like a secret, then moseys onward.

*

"I am the caterpillar," says the man smoking the hookah on the corner of Market and Second.

The white rabbit is up the street.

"Time is of a horizontal dimension," the rabbit is saying as the Spy arrives late for a Cape Fear Dance Theatre performance. "We have clocks for practical purposes, but try to experience the present moment."

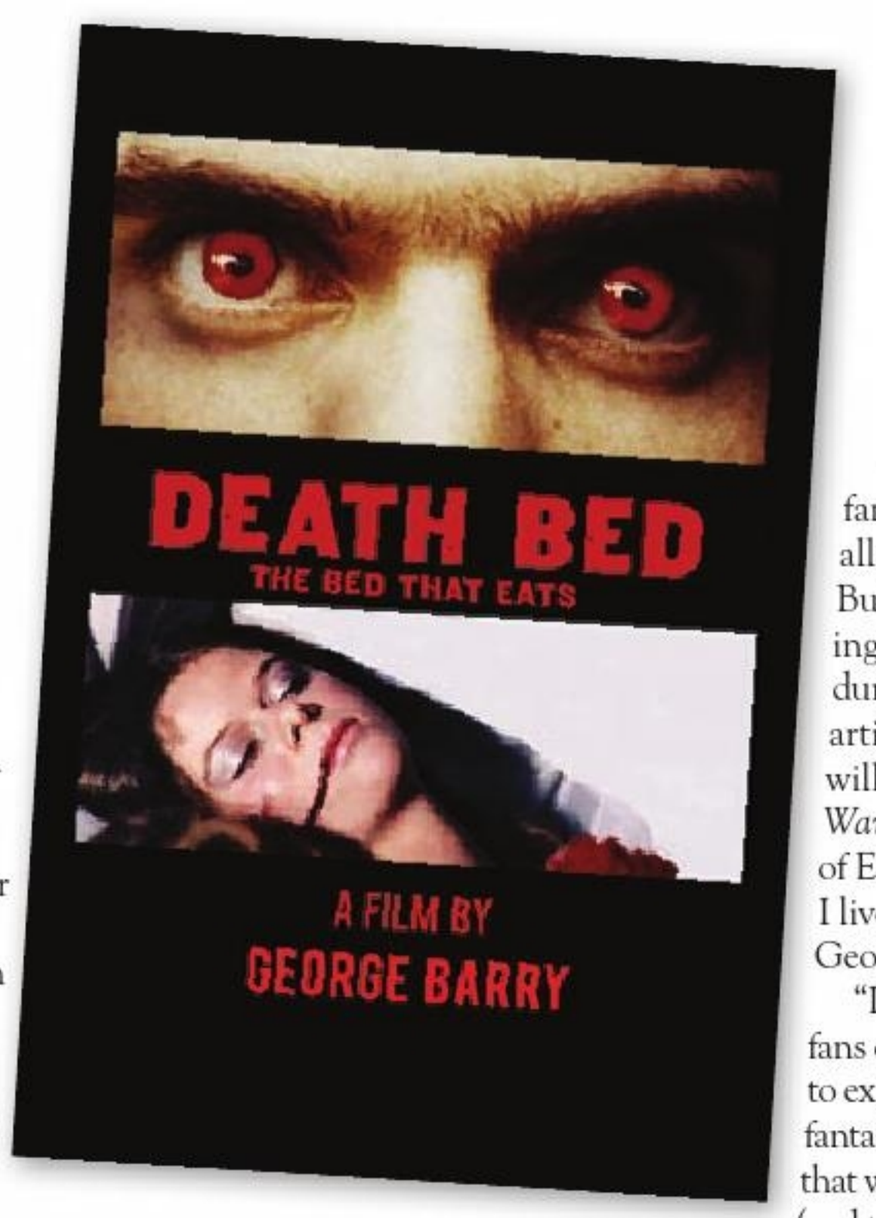
In this moment, Wilmington is Wonderland. The grinning cat follows us to the Queen's garden where ballerinas swing from low branches and cover themselves in body chalk during a choreographed dance to an electronic song called "Colour in Your Hands."

When the performers offer blue and yellow chalk like Communion, the congregation simply watches. A summer breeze lifts particles from their palms, threatens to color us all.

Our spy, senior editor Ashley Wahl, is prone to wander.

On My Death Bed

How adapting a '70s horror cult classic for the stage nearly killed me



By Gwenyfar Rohler

Everything that I've done torments me. I really would like another chance except I'd be too embarrassed to ever really try to do them again.
— Sam Raimi

The thing is I never set out to write in the horror genre. I have friends and colleagues who adore it and aspire to it, but for me what humans do to each other in the name of daily life is far more frightening than Freddy Krueger will ever be. It's also worth mentioning that — Mary Shelley, Shirley Jackson, Margaret Atwood and Calie Voorhis aside — women are far outnumbered by men in the genre, both in print and film writing. Yet here I am adapting a horror movie to the stage as part of Big Dawg Productions' Halloween Horror Festival, and to be honest, the process of writing it and breathing it to life for a live audience is far more frightening to me than anything that happens in the movie.

Death Bed: The Bed That Eats is the lost '70s cult classic that you have never seen. Written, directed and produced in 1973 by George Barry, it couldn't get a distribution deal and languished in his attic for over thirty years until he discovered in 2001 that it had actually been pirated and released in Europe, where it had quietly achieved something of a cult following. As a result of this discovery, Barry succeeded in securing a DVD release (the first official release of the film) in 2003. And so began the resurrection of *Death Bed* in the United States.

Few people noticed the DVD release; it was just one among many that year. But comedian Patton Oswalt saw *Death Bed* on DVD and was so moved that he made reference to it in his *Werewolves and Lollipops* album. The material includes a bit on his frustration as an artist unable to get his film produced — yet somebody put money into *Death Bed* and somewhere out there is a guy who built the bed and is so busy with his film career he can't play catch with his son, who grows up to resent him and consequently pursue a career that we can't discuss in a family magazine. The first time I heard Oswalt's material my jaw dropped in realization. "Oh, my God! Sweetheart, he's talking about you and Darwin!" Jock Brandis, film gaffer, founder of the Full Belly Project and love of my life, just chuckled and nodded. It's true, he built the eating mechanism that made *Death Bed* eat and his son, Darwin, was now a grown man working in the film business.

Death Bed has remained a treasured part of our family life as a result of Oswalt's commentary and all the ridiculous stories Jock has about the process. But I honestly did not expect to find myself adapting it to the stage. That happened quite by accident during a meeting with Big Dawg Productions' artistic director Steve Vernon last fall. The festival will include Vernon's adaptation of H.G. Wells' *The War of The Worlds*, Stephen Raeburn's adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's horror writings and, assuming I live through the process, the stage adaptation of George Barry's *Death Bed*.

"I just thought that with so many people being such fans of the Halloween season, it would be a fun thing to explore," said Vernon. "With so many facets of the fantasy of Halloween, it was only natural (to me anyway) that we should investigate offering as many different plays (and types of plays) as possible. I've tried to balance it out so that we will have a slate of shows that will include something for everyone."

For me, it is such a terrifying endeavor that I feel like I am going to have a stroke every time I talk about it. But at the same time, I have to admit, the fear is pretty motivating.

Raeburn points out that for him, the process of learning how to make a horror movie changed the way he thought about the genre. "As a child I suffered from 'you cannot un-see what has been seen.' Every new piece of information that my brain visually processed would stick like glue until the next new visual sensation occurred, therefore I could not visually participate in horror. No haunted houses. No scary movies. No frightening Halloween costumes." Then he made a film of Poe's work and the switch flipped. "I grew an appreciation for the magic within horror films. I learned how to dismember an actor on camera, and how to squish an eyeball in the palm of your hand, but more importantly, it changed my perspective toward horror from 'I can't un-see that!' to 'How did they do that?'"

Raeburn was introduced to Poe via his eighth-grade literature class. The students read a selection of five American short stories as a lead-up to a class trip from Morehead City to UNCW to see the stories performed on stage. "According to rumor, and maybe a touch of destiny, Steve Vernon was actually involved with that particular production," Raeburn said.

That should tell you that Vernon has been a pillar of the theater scene in Wilmington for well over twenty years. *The War of the Worlds* is actually a revival of a production that Vernon mounted seven years ago at Thalian Hall. "I was

especially intrigued by the thought of making it a mix of modern multi-media and authentic Foley [live sound effects made from everyday items], as was done by radio artists of the '30s," Vernon observes. "It will be quite a transition from the Main Stage at Thalian Hall to the stage at the Cape Fear Playhouse, but I'm excited about including it. Cole Marquis, who was the sound designer for the show seven years ago, is directing it this time around. That's also an exciting element for me."

But am I the only one in this festival who is lying awake at night worrying that my show will be awful? What if no one comes to see it? What if there are no actors in town who want to be in it and no one comes to audition? If there is no cast, there is no show. What if, when George Barry sees it, he hates it? This is just a small sample from the infinite track of anxiety that plays in my head every time *Death Bed* gets mentioned. By mid-August I had broken out in hives and a rash. How was I going to make it to October?

"I find the creative process to be a shared experience," Raeburn commented. "As a director, the creative process begins the moment I open the cover of the script; there is already an established story presented within the text and my job is to interpret what my imagination visualizes into a staged presentation using theatrical elements. Both of those outlets for creativity hold similar fears: Will the audience understand/appreciate/enjoy my interpretation?"

But he concedes that writing is much scarier. "As a writer, the fears are endless . . . Will the story/characters be misinterpreted? Will the staging be accurate to the storytelling? As an actor/director, I know there are some things in the writing that you have no power over, such as plot and dialogue. As a writer, all of this is constantly going through my head through the creative process."

Raeburn also points out that Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" takes five minutes to read aloud and has only four lines of spoken dialogue. "To me that stimulates the most incredibly boring theatrical experience ever, so I became determined to write something beyond an enthusiastic poetry reading." I note that I'm having similar trouble over here in *Death Bed* land: the entire shooting script could easily come in at under twenty minutes. That's far from a full two-act play, or as Barry discovered, a feature length film. Actually, the film *Death Bed* lacks opening credits and has about two minutes of black screen with someone eating an apple on a voice-over. That's just one of the many techniques employed to try to stretch the movie out to ninety minutes for feature length.

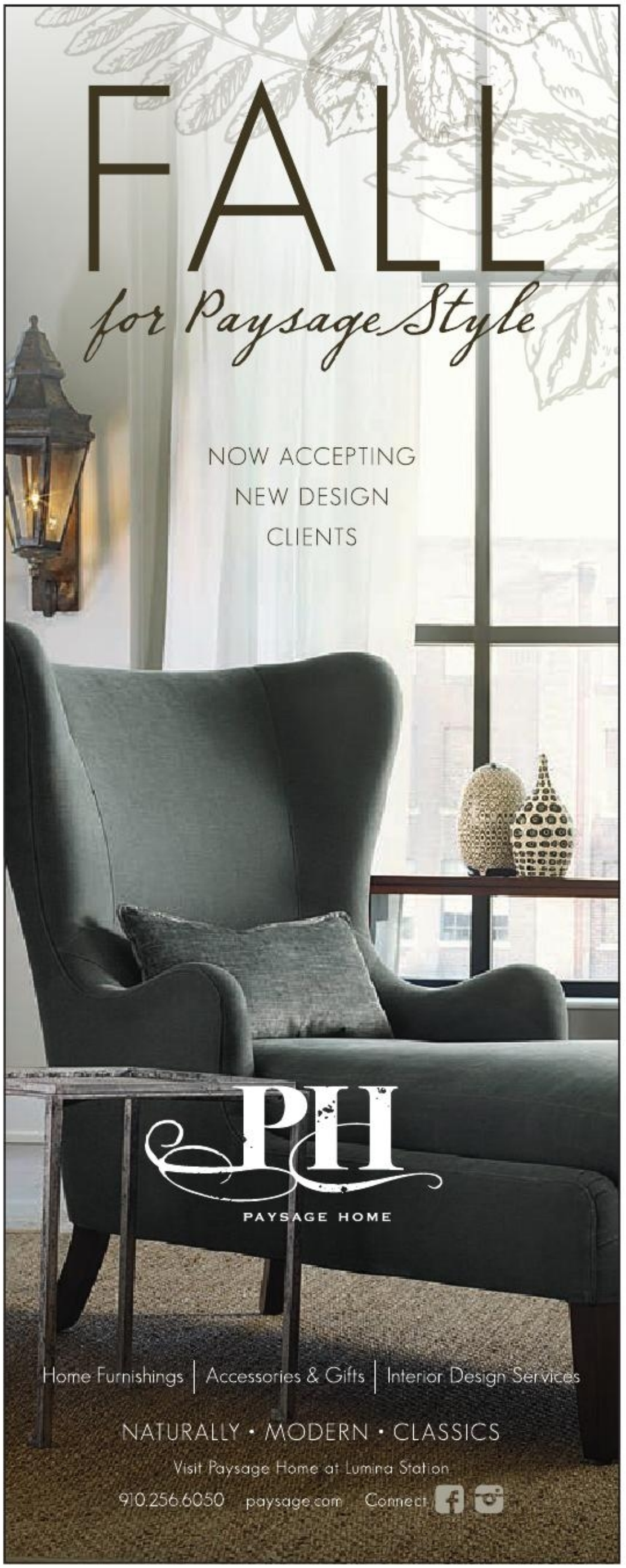
"Fear has been a motivator for me," Vernon confirmed. "As an actor, fear can be a powerful emotion to confront before walking on stage, or even during the audition process. The 'fight or flight' response that fear creates allows for a certain rush of adrenaline, as we all know. That rush can be as useful as it is exhilarating. It also releases a more risk-taking element in performance, which can produce a more interesting quality for an audience to observe."

My friend Anthony Lawson, also a talented performer and director, had said much the same thing earlier this summer when we were discussing a show he was directing. "It shouldn't be rehearsed to death. The adrenaline needs to be there. It needs to be more interesting than a game show."

But with horror it is supposed to be a different kind of fear, right? A powerlessness to a force or monster that you are at the mercy of. When you put your creative work on display it's an almost more terrifying self exposure: and you cannot protect the work from the audience, no matter how much you might want to. Perhaps that's why *Death Bed* has resonated so much with me: to be killed by *Death Bed*, you actually have to recline — it has no ability to chase you, or outsmart you. To a point, the victim must be a willing participant in their own destruction . . . that's the scariest part.

For complete schedule of Big Dawg Productions' Halloween Horror Festival performances, visit www.BigDawgProductions.org. For more information on *Death Bed* the play, visit www.DeathBedThePlay.com.

Gwenyfar Rohler fell in love with theater at Thalian Hall on her sixth birthday. She spends her days managing her family's bookstore on Front Street.



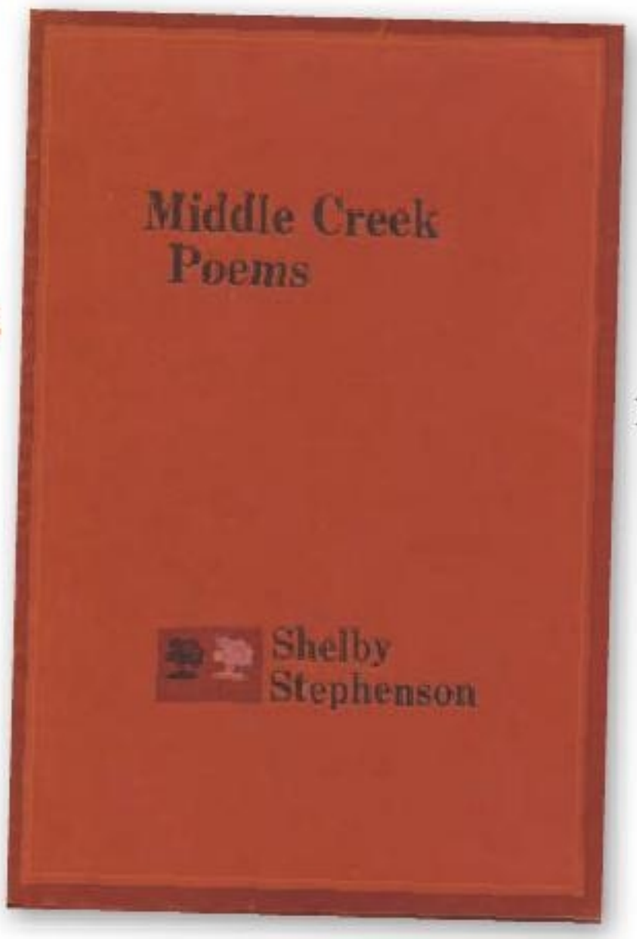
Lyric Strokes

Poet Shelby Stephenson enters the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame

By Stephen E. Smith

In the thirty-seven years

I've known Shelby Stephenson, I've heard him read hundreds of beautifully crafted poems, all of which had their memorable passages, but there's one line from one early poem that's a particular favorite of mine: "Prayer is a patient man."



That simple subject-verb-object sentence doesn't possess an especially inspiring message and there's no soaring lyric or sparkling image to ensconce it in my brain, but the thought expressed by those five words informs every poem Shelby has ever written. He is indeed a patient man, and each of his poems is a prayer, invested with the solemnity and import of every supplication ever uttered in reverence.

I arrived at this insight when I stopped by Shelby's home on an April afternoon in 1981. He'd just received copies of his first book, *Middle Creek Poems*, a beautiful letterpress edition published by Blue Coot Press, and he was, as most writers are with their first book in hand, full of enthusiasm and pride. He was holding indisputable proof that his vision was true, that his imagination, memory and mastery of language struck a note of authenticity with editors and readers.

I asked him to read me a couple of poems, and he did. The first was a sweet little lyric entitled "Creek Walk."

Your eyes float out of sycamores,
come to me on leaves
while your hair still flows
in the limp cling of breath
and I go with poles to the water,
the line catching bushes on the way,
footsteps left in air.
Your glances consume.

I am a rocking life.
Before my eyes a slow reed waves,
squeezing the light from my face.
I am the roam
after the horse has been stabled,
the stir pulsing away when there is no fire.
I want a heart's spring, a warm, slow heaven of stars
flowing through my veins.
I want a wind lightly
touching the small of my back.

He followed with a narrative persona poem titled "Tart's Fishing Worms Sold Behind the Grocery."

I told Lettie
we were just raising worms for Weaver,
she and the younguns counting them things —
why, it was a full-time job
and I bought them little boxes with the fishes on the sides,
ten cents a piece I paid
and I told Lettie
oyster boxes would do just as good —
paid a whole dollar for that whole case over there
next to the gas pump.
Weaver didn't like that, wanted the fish picture on every box —
and we was selling them to him for sixty-five cents a box
and he was selling them to the poor fishermen for $1.50.
We was busy counting worms for Weaver.
Then they go small and he said
why you're selling all your breeders
so I cut down from all these beds,
just got one now, sell worms to my friends,
must be 800 here for a dollar —
I just scoop'm in
and it don't dawn on me no more
that I'm just working for Weaver
and his big sporting goods store.

These early poems hint at the direction Shelby would take when creating the impressive body of work that's culminated with his induction into the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame. (The ceremony will be held on Sunday, October 12, at 2 p.m. at the Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities in Southern Pines.) For most of the years I've known him, Shelby has remained steadfastly devoted to the lyric, and he's worked tirelessly at sustaining a lyric poem of unusual length — a few of them more than one-hundred pages — pushing the boundaries of the genre. This requires an exceptional degree of determination; it's equivalent to singing a song that lasts for, say, four hours without losing your audience. The tune may be exquisite in its parts and delicate in its nature, but the collective attention of our contemporaries wanders easily. If Keats or Yeats, both great lyric poets, weren't required reading in college English, how many members of Generation X would read them? Yet Shelby has succeeded at singing the extended song and holding his audience by reawakening them to the familiar.

His narrative poem "Tart's Fishing Worms . . ." is the reverse side of the coin. The poem is spoken in the colloquial — "and it don't dawn on me no more" — by a persona who is more than a device to illicit humor. The poet, if he's present

in the poem at all, doesn't intend ridicule, and the persona emerges as a character whose storytelling ability is deserving of our respect. Granted, the shtick is situational, but the language is endearing, and the use of alliteration and internal rhyming—"raising worms for Weaver"/"counting worms for Weaver"/"working for Weaver"—all accommodate the absurdity—and the final end rhyme of "more" and "store" ties the scene together with just the right touch of wit. Shelby knows these characters. They are old friends, and he appreciates their use of language. The rhythms of their speech are the perfect touch of authenticity, a lighter variation of the truth as Shelby knows it—as we all know it.

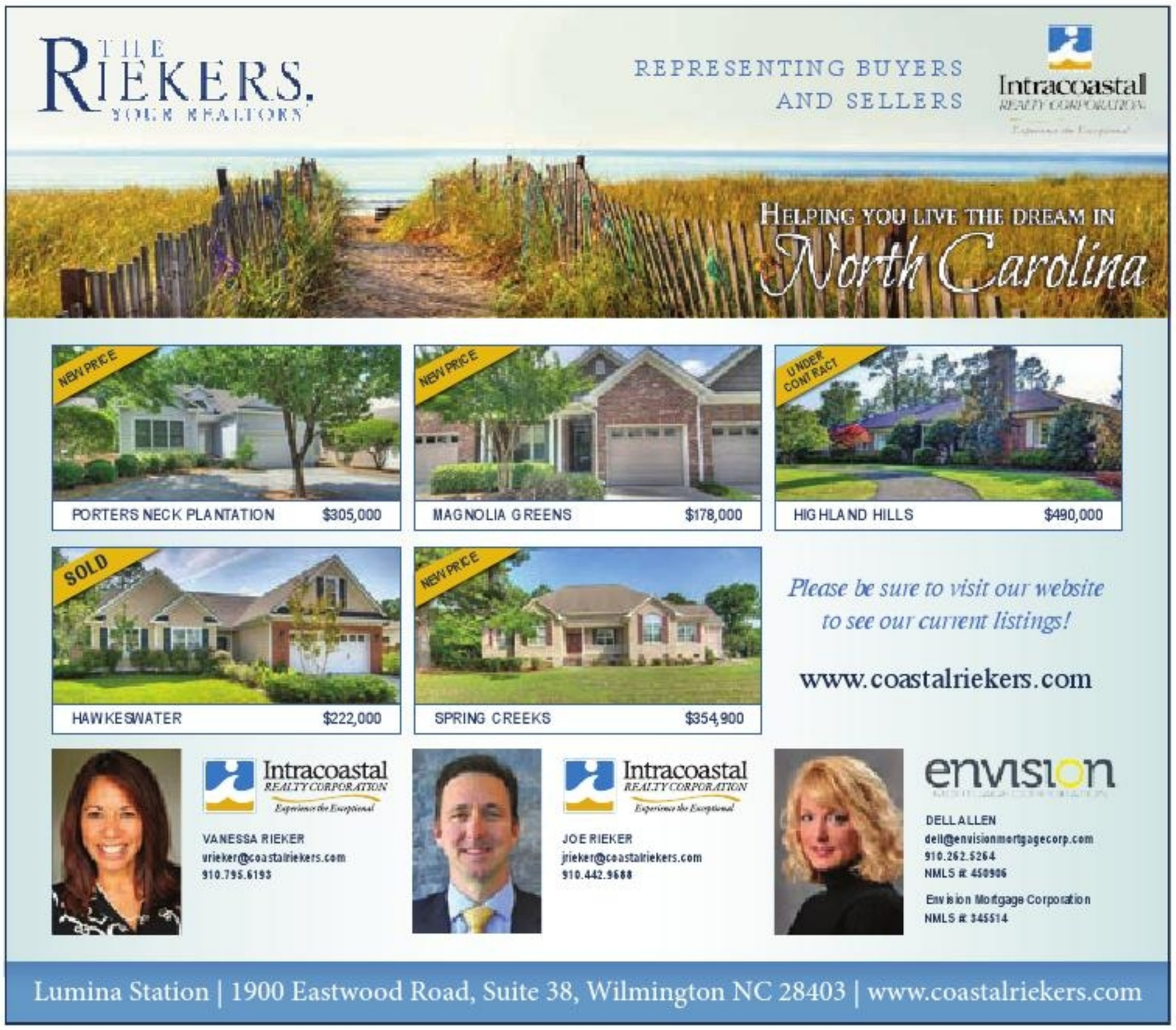
So what Shelby has done is what all poets strive for: He's found the words to express an entire sensibility, the values, the thoughts and the feelings of a people we've long written off. And he's done this by balancing the multiplicity of their inner and outer lives.

Because of the admonition against reviewing books written by one's friends, I have alluded here to verse from Shelby's *Middle Creek Poems*, which is no longer available except from rare book dealers. But Shelby's poetry hasn't remained static. In the twelve volumes that have followed *Middle Creek Poems*, his work has constantly evolved. No doubt he's chafed a little against the limitation of the lyric except when used in the service of his more recent narratives, family stories of longing, regret and celebration, where it's possible to sing the old songs with a quiet dignity. His more recent books, *The Hunger for Freedom* and *Steal Away*, fulfill the promise of *Middle Creek Poems*, as with the recent sonnet "Duck Bolling":

> I picture her married to Percy Bolling,
> Almost all over him as she herself
> Filled out every place she stood like shelves
> Of human flesh set on Shake & Giggling.
> If you ask her—How's your tomato wine—
> She was already in the row, the green
> Tomatoes turning ripe slightly, her keen,
> Caressing presence entangling a vine
> She'd drag down the middle of one long row—
> That was enough, that single field,
> To make me happy; "Peace in the Valley"
> I'd start; her hum, as if part of her toes,
> She'd interrupt: "Shub, sing that song for me
> One more time—oh—what sweet society!"

"Duck Bolling" may well be speaking for all lovers of verse. What we need is for Shelby Stephenson to sing for us one more song, one more prayer. Please.

Stephen E. Smith's most recent book of poems is A Short Report on the Fire at Woolworths. *He can be reached at travisses@hotmail.com*



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Lockwood's Folly

How one of the oldest rivers in North Carolina got its name

By Julian Monroe Fisher

The town of Supply is strung out there on Ocean Highway 17 about halfway between the Brunswick County townships of Bolivia and Shallotte. Depending on your point of reference, it's on the left by Fords Fuel and Propane store as you head south or Lewis Auto Sales and Salvage on your left if you're heading north. Either way, you blink an eye and you're likely to miss it altogether.

At second glance it's a gateway to a land that time seems to have simply passed by. Less than ten minutes away from the Minuteman Food Mart in Supply you'll find an endangered species of the American alligator living together with the Henslow's sparrows, the Hessel's hairstreak and the crafty fox squirrel.

The Green Swamp Preserve is a place where the rare red-cockaded woodpecker flies about over 17,000-plus acres of protected tall savannah grass that reminds me of walking through South Luangwa National Park in Africa's Zambia. Indeed a magnificent ecosystem, the Green Swamp Preserve, like parts of Africa, relies heavily upon the ancient practice of slash and burn to ensure that the federally protected Venus fly trap survives another day.

According to locals, the town of Supply's name originates back to the 1700s when the Lockwood Folly River was a trade route connecting up-river communities to the coast. Digging deeper, there's a lot more to Supply than one might think.

The history of Supply begins with at least two folktales about the Lockwood Folly River. The first story talks about a man who went by the name of Lockwood. As the local folktale goes, Lockwood began building the "boat of his dreams" on the banks of the river. Upon completion, he realized that the boat could not be sailed from its current location to the sea due in part to the fact that his design did not allow for the ship's draft to clear the inlet's sandbar. Alas, Lockwood's boat's draft was too deep.

River-locked, Lockwood left his dream ship there along the riverbank to fall prey to the elements. The timbers rotted away in the sun and in time the boat became known to locals as "Lockwood's Folly."

Folklore's second tale again talks about a man named Lockwood leading a group of settlers where together they built a settlement along the banks of the river.

As the story goes, Lockwood and the colonizers failed to bring enough supplies for their ambitious project. Worse yet, they had a falling out with a local group of Native Americans. In the end, they abandoned the settlement. Accordingly, the location of the failed village would be referred to as you-know-what.

There are at least two other stories regarding how Lockwood Folly got its name. As for the river of Lockwood Folly, it became a vital link to the interior of the Carolinas.

John Ogilby, a Scottish cartographer and translator, included the river as "Look Wood Folly" on his map of 1671. Ogilby was born in or near Kirriemuir, Scotland, which is also the birthplace of Scottish author Sir James Matthew Barrie, the man who created Peter Pan.

Ogilby was known for his artistry exemplified in the first edition of the British road atlas. Appointed "His Majesty's Cosmographer and Geographic Printer," Ogilby's Britannia atlas of 1675 set the standard for the road maps to follow. A portrait of John Ogilby can even be found within the pages of the 1660 edition of Homer's *Iliad*.

Because the Ogilby map predates any other map of the area, you have to wonder, how could Ogilby have drawn such a detailed map without ever traveling along the coast of the Carolinas?

Only relying upon explorers' accounts as well as translated text from the Dutchman Arnold Montanus' work, *The New and Unknown World*, he additionally drew upon references within the notes of colonial proprietors and from the papers of William Hilton. Hilton was the first British explorer to venture up the Cape Fear River.

As for the town of Supply, in the 1820s there was a trading post established along the road from Shallotte to Wilmington known as Old Georgetown Way. That name was later shortened to 'Old G.W.' and in the 1860s, locals finally named it Supply.

In the end, a single solitary drawn reference on an ancient map by an obscure Scottsman from the land of Peter Pan makes Lockwood's Folly River one of the oldest named rivers in North Carolina. You could also infer that Supply has been a key piece to the commercial well-being of the Carolinas for more than three centuries and continues to be so to this day.

Yes, I know, the Peter Pan part might be a bit of a stretch. But man alive, I just love it when exploration allows for all the dots on the map to be connected, don't you?

Julian Monroe Fisher is an explorer, anthropologist, ethnographic documentary filmmaker and published author. Between 2007 and 2014, he conducted six Explorers Club flag sanctioned research expeditions to the African continent. He currently lives with his family in Wilmington.

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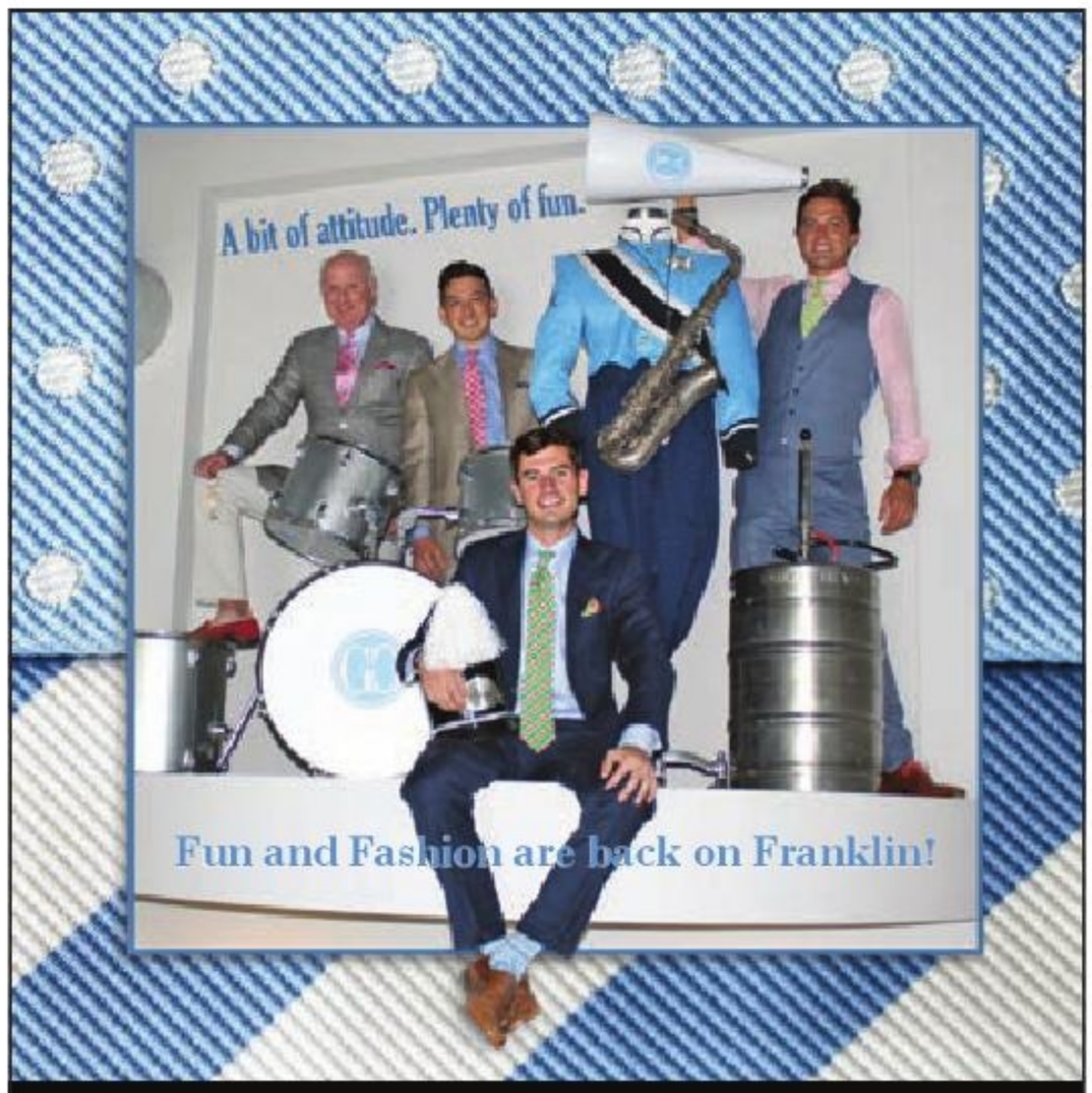

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Trivial Stuff

In the pubs of the Port City, a little knowledge is peacock beautiful

By Jason Frye

The peacock is the national bird of which country?

According to species, age, interests and venues, peacocking — that ostentatious display of our best selves to potential mates that proves our sexual prowess and dominance over competitors — takes on very different forms. Some birds grow showy feathers (hence peacocking) and perform elaborate dances, while others, like penguins, offer a simple gift to a female, acceptance.

For us humans, there's no end to the peacocking displays. Male displays include the most fitted tank top showing off a chiseled chest and Adonis arms; the most afflicted Affliction tee and bedazzled jeans; the beardiest beard, perfectly groomed with cruelty-free lanolin cream, scented with just a *touch* of sandalwood. Displays from females include jeans so skinny they look shrink-wrapped; bathing suits so small lingerie is more modest; teeth so white they're more luminous than the moon.

Both sexes shave, wax, style and perfume themselves in hopes that someone notices. It's all very strange and very subjective, but no peacocking display is so strange as the one you'll see when you attend Pub Trivia in the pubs of this old River City. Here, rather than appearance, it's smarts — or rather the ability to recall the most obscure knowledge and pop culture minutiae — that count. Much like math camp, which, for the record, I never attended. (I hate math. That's why I write. I went to Boy Scout Camp.)

Colonies of synchronous fireflies, which blink in unison in a mating call-and-response, are found in only three U.S. states; name two.

Where I play Pub Trivia, it's a little different. We have four rounds of nine questions, then between the first, second and third rounds, we get to play skeeball for bonus points (one ball per correct answer). Before the final round, we roll nine balls and the points from each roll can be assigned to the questions whose categories we know beforehand. Round Two is always music, and the last question is always something very nerdy.

My team rarely misses a single one of these questions.

Peacocking here takes a strange turn because the game is not all about smarts. There's an athletic aspect to it. And strategy. Do you go for the high-risk/high-reward 100-point target in the corner, leaving yourself with a measly 10 points if you miss; or do you play it safe, rolling for that 40, which still gives you 20 or even 30 points if you miss? Do individual team members roll between rounds? Is it the responsibility of one skeeball ninja? Does the whole team take turns each bonus round, equally distributing rolls among the members?

What was the original name of the Peanuts comic strip?

Naming your trivia team is almost as important as your actual trivia performance. The reward of the laughter of your competitors when the MC reads those Round One scores is as sweet as victory.

Teams employ different strategies for their names. Some take the subtle route, others the inside joke, others the dirty, and still others the marginally offensive. My current team has been playing under the guise *Missionary Impossible*, with PG-13 variations on each of the film titles each week. I've heard *My Office Kung Fu is Better than Yours*, *Touched by an Uncle*, *Beer View Mirrors*, *Beer Pressure*, *It Hurts When I Pee* and any variation that causes the MC to degrade or emasculate himself or another team.

Which nation drinks the most alcohol per capita, with 17.5 liters per person?

My team's reasonably sober. Sure, we all have a couple of beers over the course of the game (never mind that one of the beers we like clocks in at 9 percent), but we try to remain clear-headed. By the end of Round Two, and certainly at the end of Round Three, it's pretty clear where every team stands. This knowledge gives some teams permission to turn up the volume on their drinking (fortunate as our home pub runs a $3 Candemonium special) and their volume. This is when it's key to have a fun name.

Who was the first woman inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?

By and large, the ratio of men to women keeps Pub Trivia Peacocking to a minimum. Where I play, it's at least 6:1, so peacocking gives way to the nerdgasm of victory (or having that all-important funny name). Though there is a certain point of pride that comes with knowing some obscure piece of trivia, especially when you have your mate in tow. *What was the original name of the Grateful Dead? What's the longest word you can type using only your left hand? What do bulletproof vests, windshield wipers and laser printers have in common? Every episode of what TV show contains a Superman reference?*

Answers: India; Pennsylvania, Tennessee, South Carolina; Li'l Folks; Belarus; Aretha Franklin; The Warlocks (I would also accept Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions, an even earlier, though incomplete, incarnation of the Dead); stewardesses; they were all invented by women; Seinfeld.

Jason Frye is a travel writer and author of Moon North Carolina *and* Moon NC Coast. *He's a barbecue judge, he rarely naps, and he's always on the road. Keep up with his travels at tarheeltourist.com.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

Love to Play

With no auditions, no scripts and no starring roles, Kim Henry's innovative children's theatrical group turns loose the divine power of creativity and fun

By Jennifer Chapis

Picture 12-year-old Mark Fatum, a lightning bolt painted on his face, lip-synching "Space Oddity" by David Bowie ("*Ground Control to Major Tom . . .*") in an intergalactic talent show where the grand prize is planet Earth itself. No, *The Galaxy's Got Talent* is not an NBC blockbuster television series, it was a theatrical production staged by Luv2Act, a local children's theater where kids co-create their own performances. With no auditions, no scripts, and no starring roles, this one-of-a-kind drama company is all about fun. Their philosophy: Risk a little less control for a lot more delight.

Who's the ringleader behind the improvisational comedy skits and shimmering butterfly dance performances? Meet founder Kim Henry, devoted coach who spends her afternoons encouraging 3- to 13-year-olds to laugh, sing and shout their way to the stage. "My first priority is that everyone has a good time," smiled Kim. Wearing an African shell necklace, red hippie-chic blouse and funky dance pants, the 42-year-old drama director is gifted with more energetic imagination than most third-graders.

I felt a kinship with this woman who custom-designed her own meaningful dream job: helping kids express themselves. As a writing professor turned energy healer, I could relate. I custom-design private "Writing for Healing" workshops because, much like Kim, I want to empower people without critiquing them. Luv2Act helps kids learn one of life's most useful skills: how to discover fresh possibilities in each evolving moment. How to trust your instincts. How to think for yourself.

Originally from London, Kim enjoyed studying in a well-respected British theater as a teen, but looking back, she regrets not being afforded more creative license as a developing performer. "We were told what to do, and that was that," she said, tying her layers of dark hair into a loose bun. "Luv2Act performers have the opportunity to choreograph dances, inform the story, make costumes, select music and write narration." Kim and her chief assistant, Paige Haney guide the process, but their elementary-aged troupe offers oodles of input along the way. In a *Star Wars* dream sequence with lightsabers, the youngest girl may seem the least likely candidate to play Darth Vader, yet the audience loved the irony. (Imagine prerecorded Vader-breathing emanating from the tiniest female frame.)

At Luv2Act, artistic integrity and unconstrained creativity go hand-in-hand. "There's a point in rehearsals when it looks like chaos, but gradually that seed grows into a solid tree with many branches. You have to trust it will come together." Actively collaborating with children keeps Kim inspired and engaged. There's a time to let it go and a time to rein it in, a fine line between freedom and form. "It's not about enabling thirty ego trips," she said. "The show needs to work as a whole." But with ingenuity under their feet, the kids jump higher more joyfully. They're learning voice projection, spatial awareness, choreography and stage communication. They're also learning to let ideas fly without worry. As someone who works with clients every day to help them release fear, I can safely propose that this principle is at least partly responsible for the overwhelming joy an audience feels while witnessing Kim's troupe perform.

Last winter, galaxy game-show host Riley Perdue improvised lines that had 150 audience members in stitches. Perhaps that's why we call a theatrical performance a "play." The most magical moments cannot be scripted, and the pure pleasure is contagious.

"It's not for everyone," Kim admitted. "Some kids want to be told where to stand. Some mothers want their son to be the star. But I can humbly say that most people who discover us love us. All I want for my own daughter and son is for them to be at peace with their authentic selves."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK STEELMAN

Kim sets an example by sharing her unique gifts in her unique way. "If I couldn't direct children's plays, I don't know what I'd do. That thought single-handedly inspires me to make it work." It works as a whole because she makes sure it works for each child. "That old 'I don't like my part' thing doesn't exist at Luv2Act," she explained. "No one is the main role and everyone else the chorus. Every child has their moment. Naturally this differs depending on experience, confidence and age, but it allows everyone to do something they love." She grinned, recalling little Camron Sinclair (who loves The Beatles) portraying one of several Paul McCartney-like characters in a mop-top '60s concert recreation with collarless suits, "Yellow Submarine" guitar riffs, and faux fainting fans.

Kim's idea for child-centered theater developed over time. Always a drama facilitator, she spent her 20s coordinating puppet parades in refugee camps and schools in Bosnia and India. In her 30s, she created an eco-driven spectacle show for a sustainable community in southern Spain. With fantastical circus girls and prayers set to high-energy live music, their out-of-the-box performances showcased adults and children alike. In 2011, two years after birthing her own child, Kim birthed Luv2Act in Wilmington, North Carolina. Twenty-seven kids showed up to the first workshop. Having lived only four weeks in the United States, her idea was already a success.

Luv2Act presents moving, violence-free stories within a context that children relate to. *The Tree of Truth*, their May production at the Hannah Block Community Arts Theater, was set in a land of wood sprites and elves – a land where truth had been stolen, and was in need of being found. The set was constructed from natural materials, including Carolina Beach driftwood that Kim collected on walks near her home.

"My life (like my shows) unfolds organically," Kim said while decorating pixie wings with leafy vines. "I follow a feeling. The call of creativity is divine. It's spiritual. For it to all come together takes listening awake in the night when ideas are flowing! I'm amazed by how it works."

I knew what she meant – those magical moments when answers appear without thinking. Fulfilling your purpose feels like falling in love. Inexplicable exhilaration yields capacity you didn't know you had. Watching Kim with her daughter, Jaya, and the other kids merrily leaping in neon leg warmers, I felt her love; it was palpable.

Jennifer Chapis is an energy healer who helps people become who they were born to be. She leads workshops in Personal Power and Passion and Purpose. Find her at www.allovehealing.com.

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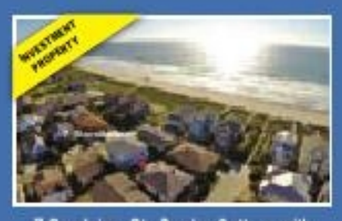
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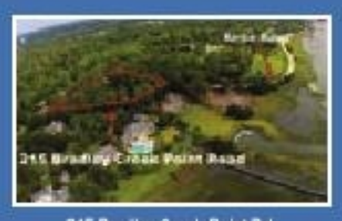
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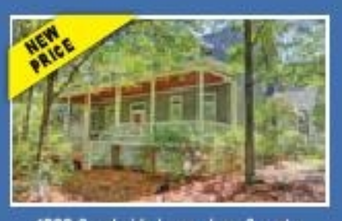
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Mr. Mayor Goes to Sea

A trio of daughters take their papa on his first cruise

By Ann Ipock

I love October for so many reasons. The sky mellows. The air is crisp and fresh with the scent of cookouts. Store clerks are busy handing out samples of hot apple cider. Fairytale pumpkins and assorted mums are displayed next to dried-up corn stalks. And with Halloween just around the corner, candy and costumes abound.

I also love the beach in October. For one thing, it's less crowded, which means more shells to find, more quiet time to read and more available parking. October is truly the most reflective month for me, personally.

This year I love October more than ever. In a few weeks, I'll be sailing out of Charleston, heading to the Bahamas — but not with my husband, Russell. I'll be accompanied by an older man, tall, silver-haired, handsome and kind. In fact, Russell isn't even jealous. You see, that older man is my daddy.

At 86 years old, Daddy's never been on a cruise, but he's quick to tell you that he has been on a ginormous ship, back in the 1940s when he served in the Merchant Marines aboard the S.S. *Malcom M. Stewart*. This was early during my parents' marriage when he traveled to both South America and Russia. I don't think he could've dreamed then that he'd ever be able to afford or enjoy a commercial cruise vacation. Yet his generosity is overwhelming, as this is a gift to us, his family.

Also going on the cruise are my sisters, Cathy and Nancy. My brother, Steve, is staying behind to be close to Mama, who resides in a nearby assisted living facility. But don't feel badly for him: Steve and his wife, Lori, have already booked their fourteenth cruise. They're going to Bermuda in 2015. I've been on six cruises, but who's counting? Oh that's right, I am! And I'm not only counting. I'm hearing Enya sing "Sail Away" in my head.

It's impossible to say who's most excited about this vacation of a lifetime. Our family is very close and we get along great, thankfully. As adults, we siblings have rented beach cottages for our families, having squeezed as many as two dozen of us under one roof. But this trip will be even more intimate. We'll be together 24/7, or close to it. And let's not forget: We'll be waited on hand and foot as we make dizzying choices about all the activities, entertainment, dining and shore excursions.

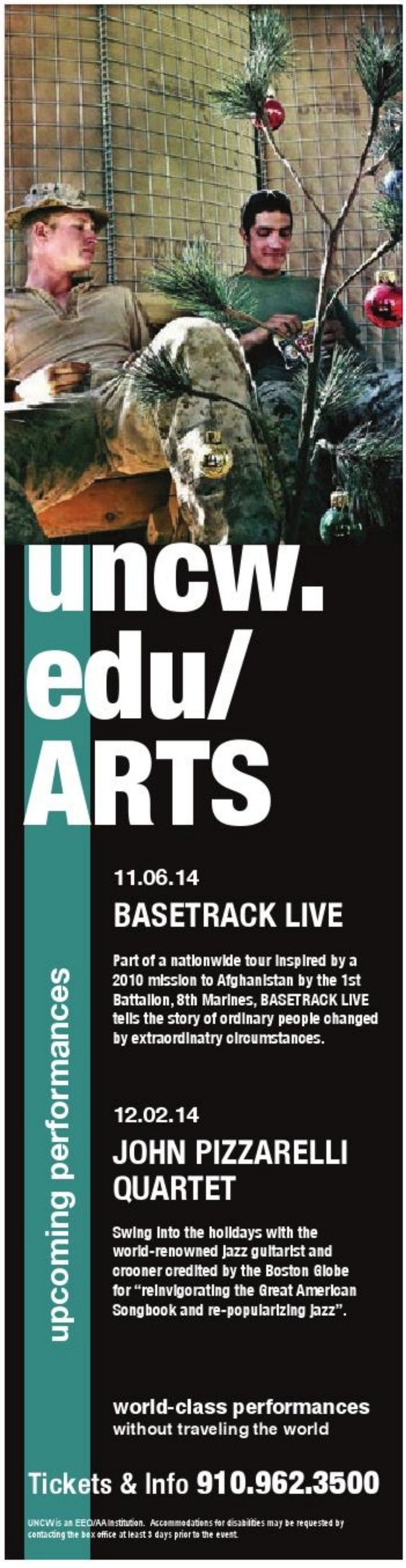
The part I'm the most excited about is watching Daddy become a kid again. Ever since I can remember, he has been fun-loving, energetic and friendly. We call him "Mr. Mayor" because he's so quick to make friends with a handshake or a pat on the back. He's also an avid outdoorsman, so I'm hoping we'll book a shore excursion on a glass-bottom boat to see the marine life.

It's also going to be great watching his reaction to the smorgasbord of food, notably the desserts. My dad never met a chocolate dessert he didn't love. When we sisters go home to visit, one of our great joys is cooking for him, because he's always so grateful and complimentary. (Plus he never learned to cook and will tell you flat out he has no intention of doing so now.)

The live evening shows should dazzle and impress all of us, but especially Daddy. Growing up, we watched Harvey Korman, Tim Conway, Paul Lynde, Jonathan Winters and many other performers on TV. He'll love the staged comedies and even the mini-Broadway shows. Nancy will want to take him into the casino. I'll want him to play bingo with me. Cathy will take him to the ship's library, where they'll research books on the history of the Bahamas. What's not to love? (Did I mention this is also Cathy's first cruise?)

The first day of the cruise, when we embark, I'll be taking pictures and recording Daddy's reaction. Thank goodness for my 13 megapixel Android, which rivals any camera I've ever owned. When we all stand at the edge of the ship, goombay smash in hand, swaying to reggae music, watching the tugboat guide us out to sea and waving to the folks left behind, I'll want to freeze those moments forever. Yeah, Mon, October never looked so good.

Ann Ipock is an award-winning Southern author, humorist and speaker whose books include the Life is Short *series. She may be reached at amipock@ec.rr.com.*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Letter From Oz

A nighttime exploration of an abandoned theme park proves magical – and not a little scary

By Gwenyfar Rohler

"So is the Scarecrow not coming?" asked Anthony Lawson, turning around on the yellow brick road to reveal a larger-than-life grin.

"Um, I think Jock is the Tin Man," I responded. "You know the industrial worker. He's off to go see a farmer." And his heart is really not in this, I thought. After a moment I added, "I guess that makes me Dorothy."

"Yeah, of course," Ryan Trimble answered, pirouetting in his ruby red sneakers on the yellow brick road. We were at the Land of Oz, an abandoned theme park on the backside of Beech Mountain Ski Resort near Banner Elk. I had rented Dorothy's farmhouse for a couple of days and invited Ryan Trimble, the world's most obsessed *Wizard of Oz* fan, and Anthony Lawson, Wilmington's answer to Bert Lahr, to come along. My other half, Jock, had agreed to come with that look on his face that says, "I am doing this because I love you, not because I want to." He does not vacation well and, it would come as no shock to those who volunteer with him at Full Belly Project to learn, he had arranged to meet with a couple of farmers in the area while we were there.

I had learned about the defunct theme park as an undergrad at Appalachian State University in Boone, which is roughly twenty minutes from Beech Mountain. One of the popular things to do was to break into the Land of Oz at night and wander around. Until this year I had not seen it in daylight or sober.

My friend Jeff had visited the Land of Oz as a child when it was still operational and with great glee burbled on and on about it as if he were six years old all over again. Apparently Dorothy greeted you on the porch, then led you through the house down to the storm cellar, where a combination of sound effects, black lights and scenery created a "twister" that took you to Oz, which was out a different door than the one you walked through to get there.

As the renter, I had picked up the keys to the house from the after-hours box outside the rental office. Once inside the house, I flew through looking for the cellar door, fumbling with the keys to see if I had access to the tornado area. Jock quietly followed as I came to each successive door, squealing and screeching with excitement as I found the right keys.

At the end of the tornado effect is a replica of the upstairs house, but in complete disarray and built at an angle as if it had endured a twister. Try as you might, you cannot walk upright in it. Scrambling and sliding in the dim light (no electricity after a tornado), Jock and I made our way to the outside door, which swung open with enough force to spin me backward, ultimately revealing the Wicked Witch of the East reclining on the chaise longue in the wonky parlor.

I screamed.

It took me a moment to realize she was the mannequin whose legs stick out from under the house during Autumn at Oz, the one weekend a year the park is open to the public. Vibrating with adrenaline, I took Jock's hand as we stepped out onto the yellow brick road together. "Welcome to Oz, Darlin'," he drawled, and kissed me.

Anthony, Ryan and I couldn't get enough of the yellow brick road. If anyone had seen us, we probably looked to them like a cross between Japanese tourists and crime scene photographers. We would all take a picture, take three steps, then snap our shutters again.

Next to the farmhouse was a beautiful red barn with a grain silo.

"Someone lives here," I said to Ryan.

We peered in the windows.

Ryan agreed, pointing out the blankets thrown across the furniture and the shoes on the floor.

"Maybe they come here part time during vacations?" I mused and silently wondered about the family that might spend school vacations here — the kids coming to visit Oz for Labor Day and Christmas. Would the magic wear off if you grew up with it?

Later that night, when it was very, very dark, the gates to the park opened and a burgundy SUV drove ominously up the driveway. As one person, three sets of eyes followed the car's progress.

"Can we help you?" I called form the front porch.

"Oh, you did arrive," said a middle-aged brunette while jumping out of the car. "I'm your landlord. I live in Uncle Henry and Aunt Em's barn." She pointed

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOCK BRANDIS

to the red barn. *Aah, mystery solved*, I thought. *But wouldn't you think in all the phone calls and emails, you would have mentioned that you live fifty feet from the building and might be arriving after dark?*

When I first called to arrange the rental months earlier, suffice it to say the experience was intensely strange.

"You called someone to rent an abandoned theme park and you expected a normal and reasonable phone call?" Jock asked skeptically.

"Fair enough," I conceded.

And after the successive exchanges, part of me wasn't certain the keys were going to be waiting for us when we got there.

I only got cell phone service in one part of the park — and only if I stood completely still and held out one hand. Ryan, on the other hand, never put his phone down. Our resident millennial was tweeting, Facebooking and texting almost constantly while we were there. "Ryan, can't you stop that?" I asked. "We're in the Land of Oz! Doesn't that entertain you enough?"

"Sorry," he said, giving me a weird look. Later that day he held out his phone to show us a stylized map of the park from the '70s that he found online.

"That must be where the petting zoo was," Anthony pointed out.

"Yeah, you came up the ski lift to the gazebo and then went to the overlook . . ." Ryan traced the path with one finger and nodded his head in the direction of the dilapidated fountain in the center of what looked like a landing pad and the now-empty gazebo where the bust of Judy Garland had been. The park had opened to much fanfare in 1970 and seemed to do well. But in 1975, an arsonist set a fire that destroyed the museum on the grounds and much of the park. Though it reopened, the park was never quite the same. The venture closed permanently in 1980.

"Do you want to see my Oz room?" our landlord asked. She was on her way to meet someone for margaritas but let us in to the end of the barn where what was left of the Oz museum and the relics of the Land of Oz were housed. In a room about the size of a guest room in a suburban home, every square inch of wall space was covered with framed book covers, posters, tickets to the park, newspaper stories, lunch boxes with Oz images on them and costumes from some of the characters in the park. It was sensory overload. Jock fled back to Dorothy's farmhouse in less than ten minutes to the solace of a cold beer. The landlady had left us instructions to unplug the display cases and pointed out two overstuffed scrapbooks that we could take back to Dorothy's for the evening and look through.

The Land of Oz was a character- and experience-driven theme park. It had no roller coasters or rides, except for the "balloon" ski lift that took you back to your car from the Emerald City. Once you had come through the petting zoo and the tornado to the yellow brick road, you encountered a series of singing and dancing characters that told the story of Oz and guided you on your journey through meeting the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion in his den, the Wicked Witch in her castle, which was hidden in an orchard of monstrous trees, and more on your way to the Emerald City. We had identified most of the locations except for the cage filled with bird houses around a gnarled old tree.

"That must be the Crows," Ryan finally reasoned. Later, looking at the scrapbooks, he was confirmed. Apparently the aviary had housed hundreds of rare and exotic birds when the park was open.

Confrontations with the Witch and the travelers would continue up the road to the Gates of the Emerald City. Sadly, the Gates are the only part of the Emerald City still left — the rest was taken out by the fire and has now been turned into a housing development. Once inside the Emerald City, a song and dance stage show with the Wizard and Dorothy would culminate in Dorothy flying off in a balloon back home.

"How are we not making a documentary?" Anthony asked while we pored over the scrapbooks in the parlor. "With the combined skills of the four of us, how are we not making a documentary?"

I had to agree with him. Ryan works at WECT, Jock started out in documentary film for the CBC and, well, Anthony and I are just really nosy, curious writer-types. When I say we covered every square foot, I am not kidding. We found the Munchkin houses that were in storage, the disassembled house for the Tin Man, and the costumes that the performers use for Autumn at Oz.

Unfortunately, shortly after he asked that question, the realization finally hit me that we were sleeping in a defunct amusement park fun house, far from civilization on top of a mountain. All of Anthony's Cowardly Lion antics caught up

with me. "Oh, God, look at that," he said, pointing out the window on the stairs to the opposite peak where the Sugar Mountain Ski resort looked for all the world like the hotel from *The Shining.* Here's the thing about Dorothy's farmhouse: Since it is an amusement park fun house, it is built to endure a tremendous amount of wear and tear and people trampling through it. But it was not built to actually house people. In the mid '90s, the owners of the park renovated the show kitchen and bathroom to actually work so that the house could be rented out for overnights. But the basic things that you have come to expect in a home — like minimal sound baffling insulation — were noticeably absent. If Ryan rolled over in his sleep in Dorothy's room, we could hear him in Uncle Henry and Aunt Em's. Anthony had taken the upstairs room, which used to be an office/storage space.

"Come look out my window," he said. "You are not going to believe this."

The window was actually two windows on each side of a staircase, we assumed to let in natural light. He turned the lights on in his room and off in the stairway. A spymirror appeared where the interior window had been. "And then there's that thing." He pointed to the resort again, shook his head and muttered an obscenity.

"Aah, look at that." Jock pointed at the window and downward. "You can see right into the bathroom skylight." We each took turns looking. "Oooh, that's creepy," Jock chuckled.

Combined with the poltergeist that lived in the refrigerator, I wasn't going to be sleeping anytime soon.

By Day Two, the initial flush of excitement and exploration had calmed down. Jock took a walk alone with me on the yellow brick road. As an old movie guy, he could appreciate the artistry that had gone into creating the trees for the orchard, the Gates of The Emerald City and the meticulous planning and engineering that was necessary to make something like this happen. Part of what makes the park so remarkable is that they didn't try to level out the mountain: The path weaves and undulates up and down with the natural contours of the area as much as possible. After more than thirty years of benign neglect, rhododendron frames the windows of the viewing gazebo for the Scarecrow's house, and though the stream through Munchkin Land is dry, its gravitational path is still evident.

"The dogs would love this," I commented.

"Are you kidding? They'd be in heaven!" Jock agreed.

"You know I don't show it, but I really love them and I really miss them when they aren't around . . ."

"Are you ready to go home to them?" He asked and kissed me again at the Gates to the Emerald City. I nodded and, grinning at him, clicked my heels together three times.

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Hello! Hello!

How the Communication Age came to the Port City

By Susan Taylor Block

In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell patented a rustic telephone. The Scottish-born scientist's mother and wife both were deaf. While experimenting with hearing device models, he developed an instrument made of diaphragms, magnets and a battery that conveyed the human voice far past its ability to project. No longer would folks have to read handwritten letters to communicate for the voice of everyone from their boss to their beloved could travel mysteriously from the caller's lips to the recipient's ear.

Over the next two years, the American inventive genius Thomas Alva Edison worked on improving Bell's telephone. The result was a carbon microphone that was utilized from 1878 until 1930 in both telephones and radio broadcasting. It was just one of 1,093 patents that were awarded to Edison, who also gave us the standard greeting, "Hello." Bell pushed for "Ahoy," but Edison's choice became the universal opening line. When reception was poor, callers shouted, "Hello! Hello!" much like the now familiar "Can you hear me now?"

Telephone line installments and city alarm connections were underway locally by 1879. At the time, Wilmington truly was a tree-lined city, and the plethora of live oaks served up much more than aesthetic pleasure. With no central air conditioning, oaks and other leafy trees created green umbrellas and canopies during summer. So, nineteenth century tree huggers looked askance when the saws emerged.

"On Market Street, telephone poles will be placed so as to be a protection to the shade trees," countered telephone company sources, in the *Star*. Promising not to cut limbs that would require more "than an ordinary pruning knife," Southern Bell continued stringing some of those very first lines on Market, from Fourth to Seventh streets; and on Fifth Street, from Castle to Market.

The arboreal debate would continue. Entrepreneur and nature lover Hugh MacRae was serving as an alderman for the City of Wilmington in 1899 when he called attention to unnecessary tree damage being done by telephone company linesmen. Subsequently, a motion carried that allowed the mayor, Alfred Moore Waddell, to "prosecute persons who cut or mutilate the trees, except by permission from the mayor."

By 1888, Wilmington and area sounds — Wrightsville, Greenville and Masonboro — sounds had about thirty Bell Edison telephones. Some were strictly commercial lines, like Standard Oil and five different railroad companies. With their headquarters in Wilmington, the Atlantic Coast Line was the biggest customer, until their corporate offices moved to Jacksonville, Florida, in 1960.

In the absence of phone books, local papers carried notices of new hook-ups and fresh numbers. They included phones at the Wilmington or soundfront residences of George Wilson Kidder, William Latimer, M.S. Willard, James Sprunt, W. H. Stokely, E.W. Manning and Pembroke Jones.

By March 1899, there were over 500 phone lines in the Wilmington exchange. That same year, Morris Bear and Brothers began building the Messenger and Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Buildings at 121–129 Princess Street. The structures were designed by architect Charles McMillen and are still standing. The city's operators worked from the second floor for many years. Kate James kept the lines straight and served as electrician.

By 1900, phone lines ran to Wrightsville Beach and Carolina Beach. At Wrightsville Sound, a phone line emerged at the Airlie Road property of William A. Wright, Jr., for the convenience of summer occupant John Wilder Atkinson, Wright's brother-in-law. Phones were making their chiming rings at Brunswick County's Plantation Row, as well. Col. Kenneth M. Murchison and James Sprunt had separate phones at Orton. Frederic Kidder, with co-owner Henry Walters, had a phone at Clarendon Plantation; and Mr. Kidder had service at Kendal Plantation.

The Brunswick County line originated in Wilmington and had been strung across the river. The first one had to be removed and was replaced in 1901. W. J. Kirkham supervised as the new cable was "stretched across the river at Market Street." Apparently multi-faceted, Mr. Kirkham also was a serious Masonboro Sound farmer who shipped produce to large national markets. He maintained a storefront downtown to sell produce and famously good oysters to locals.

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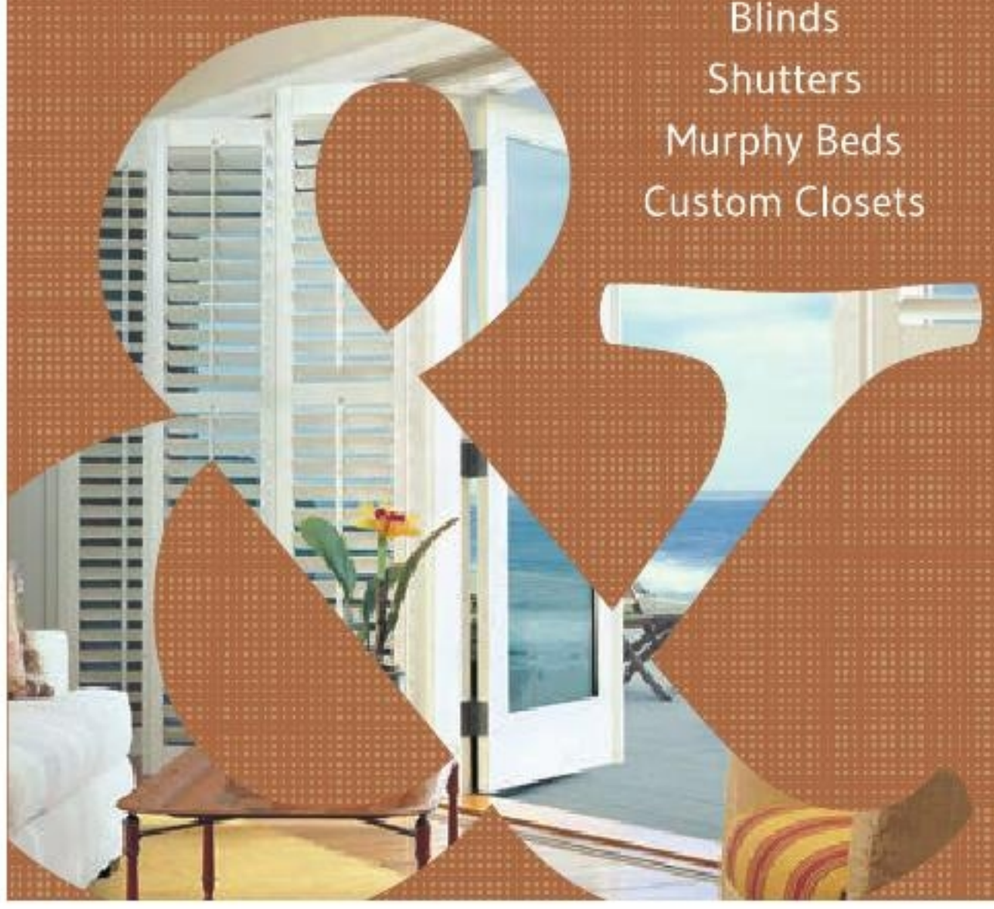

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PORT CITY JOURNAL

During the telephone's pioneer days, sometimes subscribers shared lines, resulting in much eavesdropping and occasional shock. On one occasion, a young Chatham County lady named Flossie Stone was mentioned as having typhoid fever, while another conversation was bleeding in concerning a separate medical case in which a woman had just died. The next morning, Miss Stone awoke to read her own obituary. She was my grandmother, Flossie Stone Hill, and later she helped straighten things out as chief operator for telephone offices in Burlington, Hendersonville, Durham and Wilmington.

About 1907, when the names "Bell and Edison" were emblazoned on most phones, Wilmingtonians were astonished to learn that the iconic Mr. Edison and telegraph inventor Guglielmo Marconi were planning a trip to the Port City. Wireless telegraphy blended the discoveries of both men, and they visited together as a product promotion. The demonstration took place in the now-razed Southern Air Line Railroad office building that was located at 213 North Front Street. Edison and Marconi sent messages back and forth from one room to another as audience members marveled. A few observers thought it a bit too miraculous, and searched in vain for some method of trickery.

The technology seemed dizzying at the time, but the human elements still had much Southern charm. Since callers were reliant on operators to actually place each call, switchboard workers became familiar in voice and name. Gifts abounded. Wilmington's Angola Lumber Company presented all the city operators with "beautiful boxes of fine writing paper;" automobile dealerships offered to chauffeur them on day trips; and many telephone customers bought them Christmas gifts as if they were beloved nieces.

But when it came to charm, there was nothing to match the telephone world of Wrightsville Sound and Wrightsville Beach. In 1912, Southern Bell built a small operator's residence at Villa View, a neighborhood located just west of Wrightsville Sound. The cottage sat in the same spot as the automated telephone station does today, and it was quite homey. There was a kitchen, bedroom, walk-in pantry — and a switchboard. Once in operation, the little switchboard provided the beach's first year-round telephone system, even though less than a dozen families lived at the beach full time back then.

Resident Bob Doyle manned the switchboard on a part-time basis. Soon, Southern Bell hired George Larson, a builder from Seagate, to construct a five-room "office" that would include a switchboard room, battery room, living room, bedroom and kitchen. Loula Herring, the chief operator, moved into the house, where she was, quite literally, on-call day and night.

Sound residents like the McGowan, Taylor, Wright and Hinton families often brought hot meals

for the operators, most of whom were schooled on the sound and attended church at Mount Lebanon Chapel. The operators were bright women, and they memorized an amazing amount of telephone numbers. They often doled out advice on request and gave weather reports frequently. On one occasion, a man, obviously unfamiliar with the stove, called to ask an operator how to cook collards.

With no mechanical or digital message machines, the Villa View operators functioned as such for Wrightsville Sound and beach. Messages generally were mundane, but sometimes were indicative of the political and economic power that spread across the Wrightsville area. The news of the bombing of Pearl Harbor arrived at Villa View before the famous radio announcement. "They knew things early there," said Phyllis Millard, whose mother, Luola Herring, worked as a Villa View operator for many years.

Most likely, the connection to Pearl Harbor came through luminary Henry Walters, the ultra-private art collector, financier, Roosevelt relative, and creator and CEO of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. He lived seasonally with Mr. and Mrs. Pembroke Jones at Airlie, where he practically ran the railroad by telephone. Even after turning a bit of his power to nephew Lyman Delano, Mr. Walters continued to direct business at the ACL on one or another of the five Airlie phones.

Long-distance telephone calls were placed much more frequently after 1920, but could only be received in larger cities like Washington, D.C., New York and Baltimore. The long distance service, known as "Hear-A-Whisper," was slow, sometimes taking half an hour for operators and equipment to create the link. The local paper carried the news that Southern Bell had reduced the wait time to make a long-distance call from 7.5 minutes in 1925 to just 2.4 minutes in 1930. The lowest day rate for long distance then was sixty cents a minute for distances of one hundred miles.

Modernity truly hit the beach in 1947 when it became possible to dial directly from the island. Wrightsville Beach Mayor Raiford Trask phoned Wilmington Mayor E.B. White on July 24, 1947. After the little Villa View station closed, longtime Wrightsville operators like Maxine Dizor and Lossie Gardell transferred to the large Bell South building at Fourth and Princess streets.

Today, one aspect of distance communication has come full-circle. The living warmth and texture of the human voice is again taking a back seat. Emails and texts proliferate, and their toneless, expressionless communications often cause the same forms of confusion as did some of those handwritten letters of the ages. Voices can be precious.

Susan Taylor Block is a Wilmington native who enjoys researching and writing about her hometown.

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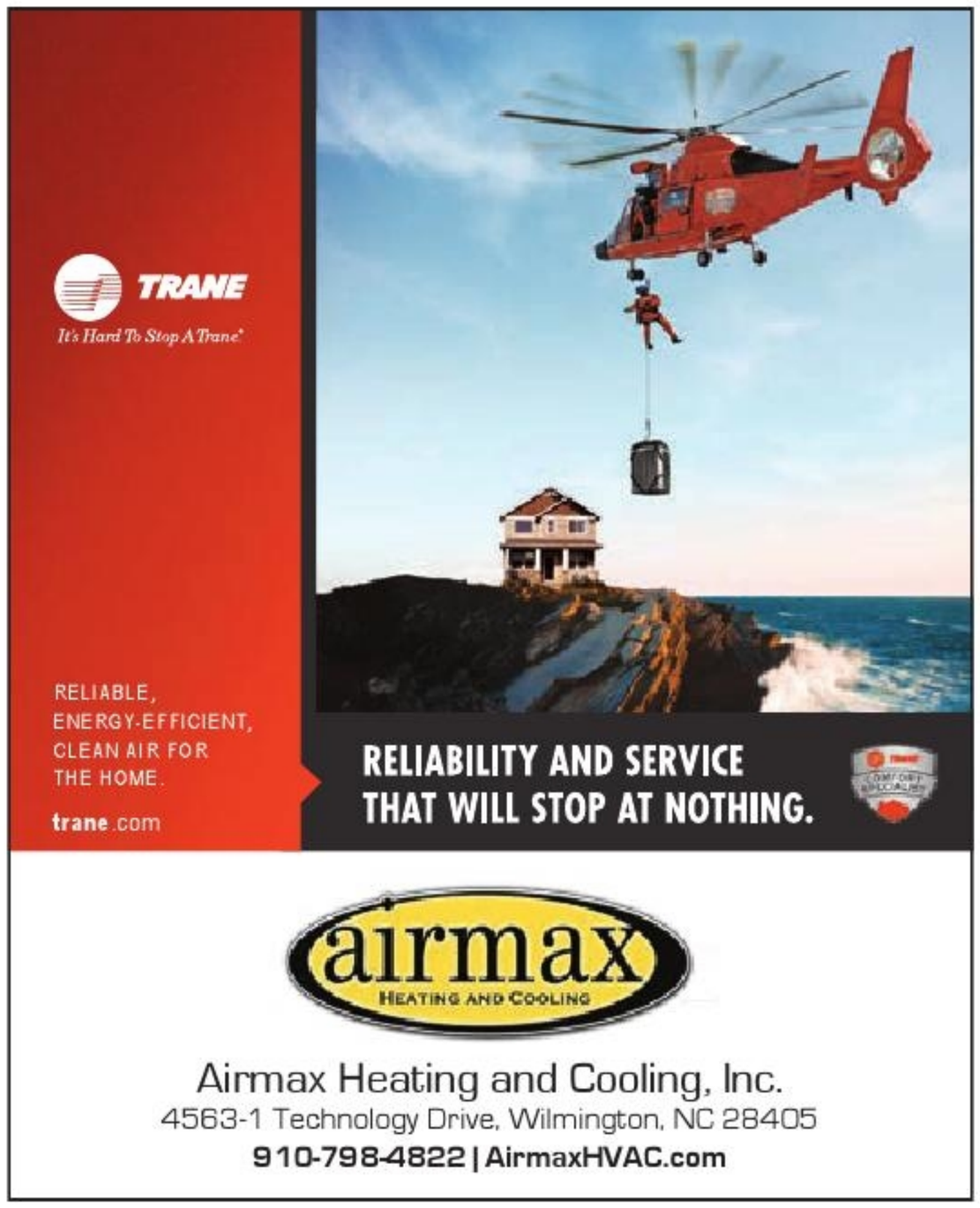
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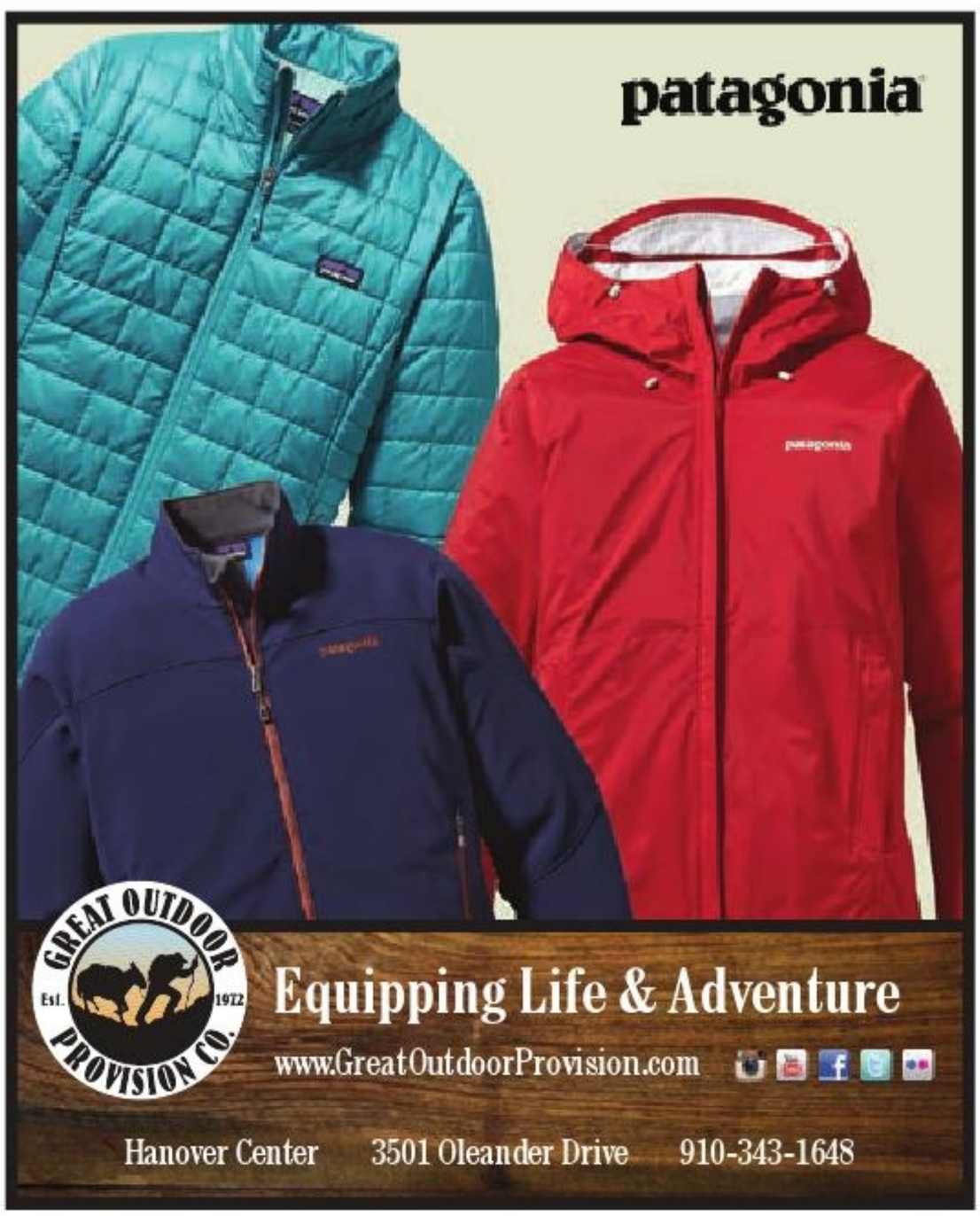
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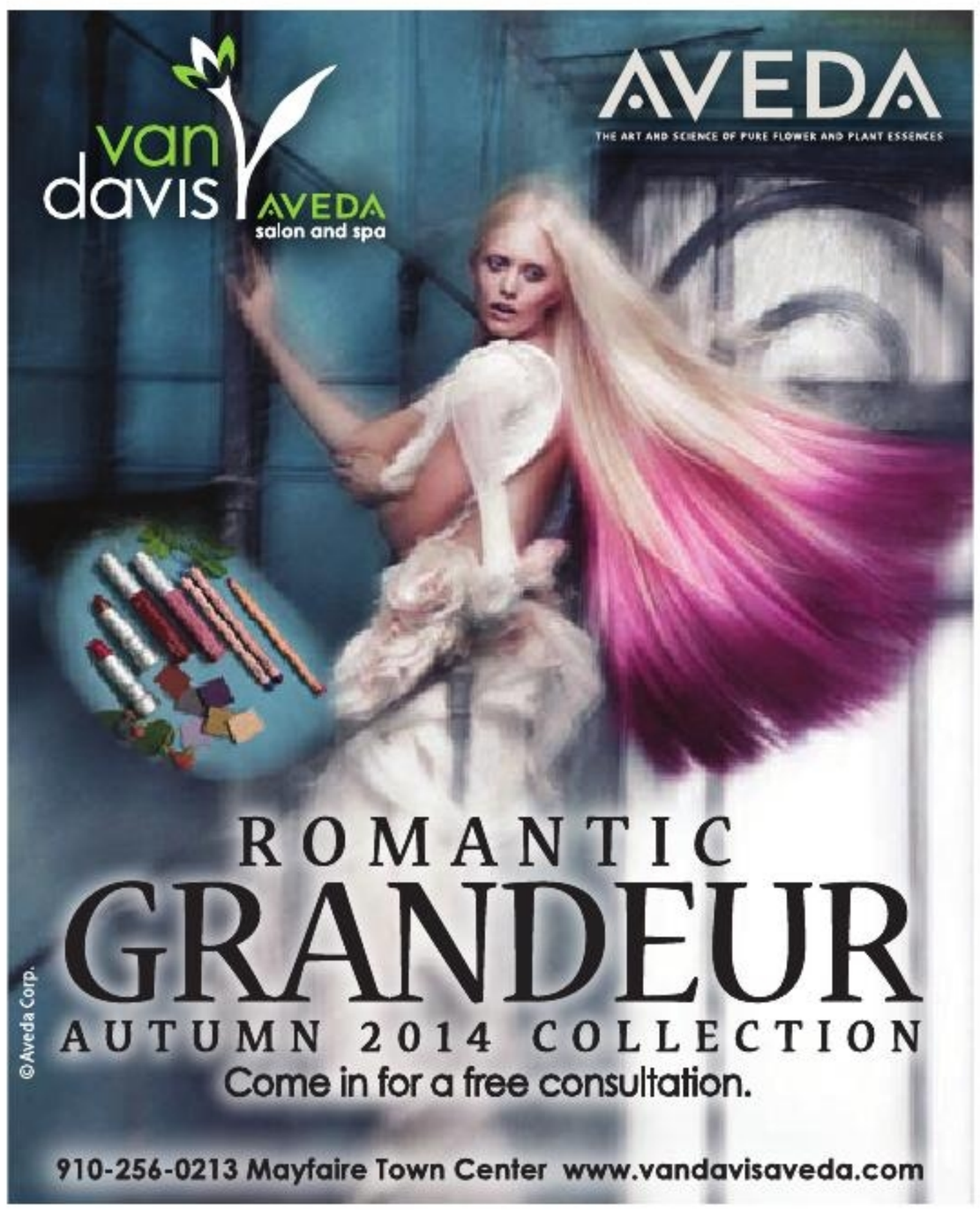
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Gentle Hauntings

Don't look now but the ghosts of Whistler's Mother and Woodrow Wilson riding a bicycle might be right where you are standing

By John Justice

We were talking about haunted houses and my friend said: "I think every house that's ever been lived in is haunted, don't you?" I do, and not just houses — spaces, entire towns.

Not by ectoplasm rattling chains and going BOO! in the night. Instead, a kind of lingering. Traces of people dead and gone. Something in the air we breathe that's different because of lives lived by people who stood in the place where we now stand. It's a benign haunting that opens things up and lets us take a deep look into time.

We see Minnie Evans tending the gatehouse at Airlie Gardens, using Crayolas to draw the fantastical pictures that got her famous. She drew because a voice in a dream told her: "Draw or die." So she drew.

Wild asparagus used to grow alongside Airlie Road. There was a fisherman named Roland who would pick the delicacy to augment family meals at his house just by the bridge over the Inland Waterway. He'd cook asparagus covered, in water and some butter.

On the right night, we might see the actress Isabella Rossellini burst naked from a row of bushes on Keaton Avenue as she did for *Blue Velvet* in 1986. The movie crew shooed kids away, but they say a lot of grownups stuck around to watch the magic of movies in action.

Maybe we can catch the smoke and roar of one of Buffalo Bill's shebangs at Thalian Hall on Chestnut Street. Buffalo Bill Cody did seven shows in Wilmington, the last one in 1916, when Woodrow Wilson was in the White House steering wads of money to build the U.S. Customhouse on Front Street.

Wilson played all over town when he was a young man known as Tommy. He had the first bicycle in Wilmington and one fine day pedaled it down Nun Street and into the Cape Fear River.

Wilson hit the river a stone's throw away from the landing where a boat slipped out one September night in 1862. William B. Gould and seven other African-American slaves rowed out to one of the U.S. blockade ships, got aboard, and promptly enlisted in the Navy. (Before leaving, Gould had helped build the Bellamy Mansion up Market Street; you can see his initials inscribed in his flowery hand on the plaster he and other slaves and African-American artisans applied.)

You can see some confused townspeople on December 8, 1941, asking: "Where is Pearl Harbor?" We learned soon enough. Nearly 200 young men born and raised in Wilmington fought and died in other previously unknown sites — Saipan, Iwo Jima, Tarawa, Guadalcanal . . .

You might catch the spirit of the woman known as "Whistler's Mother." She was born in Wilmington and went on to live in London, where her son James painted her. Her portrait now hangs in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, a long way from the house where Anna Mathilda McNeill Whistler was born at the corner of Fourth and Orange streets.

It seems to me that any town that people have ever lived in is haunted. Keep your eyes open for gentle hauntings swirling around us. Who knows, maybe something like what Minnie Evans saw: "The whole entire horizon/ all the way across the whole earth/was all together with pictures/All over my yard/Up all the sides of trees/Everywhere was pictures."

John Justice is a writer and artist living in Chapel Hill.

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Season of Memory

As the landscape and season change, memories of school days return

By Bill Thompson

Every fall for nearly twenty years I began the school year as either a student or a teacher. Now I am neither. But the cooler air, the changing of the colors in the trees and the familiar orange school buses going by my house bring back a host of memories from so many years ago. They are mostly fond memories of friends, teachers, ballgames, even some particular academic recollections. But nostalgia is a great editor of our memories. It casts a shadow over those things we would rather forget, things that we wouldn't want to do again even knowing now the things we didn't know then. And that's the way I want to leave it.

Life is too short to think of all the "might have beens," or the "if onlys." Looking back doesn't hold the excitement of the first time things happen. We already know the result of the past. What's the fun in that? It was the uncertainty of the future that made life so interesting and exciting.

We older folks are often asked, "If you could go back and do your life over, what would you change?" I have to say, "Not much." As the old song goes, *Regrets? I had a few but, then again, too few to mention.*

Come fall, I'd rather remember seeing the friends I had every year from the first through the twelfth grade. In our small, rural school there wasn't much turnover in the student body. We had all been born there in that community and we wouldn't leave each other until graduation. If you see the same people almost every day for all those years, you form bonds that never break even over long distances and time.

When I went off to college, it was a new adventure with new people — some from places I had only read about in *National Geographic* and some from other exotic places like Raleigh and Charlotte and Stedman and Kinston.

My life went from being carefully supervised to . . . well, it was still carefully supervised on the Baptist campus of Campbell College in little Buies Creek in the early '60s. It wasn't until I went over to Chapel Hill as a graduate student that my life was restricted only by my own decisions of conscience and the laws of municipal, state and federal government. Oh, what freedom, relative as it was!

One of my professors at Campbell was a wonderful lady who had been there almost since the beginning of the school. She taught English grammar and we began each class with a prayer. She was as concerned about our moral development as she was about our academic progress. On one occasion when one of her students was unable to perform in class as well as was expected due to his weekend revels, she chastised him by declaring there in class, "I know why you are so unprepared. You were over at Chapel Hill this weekend carousing with those infidels and smoking cigarettes!"

When I later joined those "infidels" in Chapel Hill, I experienced another adventure, another expansion of horizons that I never envisioned back in little ole Hallsboro. Certainly my studies expanded my intellect, but that was a time when life as we knew it, particularly in the South, was changing. Many of the students disagreed with the legislature on who could speak on campus. The Speaker Ban Law limited who could speak specifically if they were admitted communists or had ever done anything "subversive"; that meant not just being communists but promoting disturbances related to race as well. That open opposition to authority was in stark contrast to my undergraduate life. In addition, the "sexual revolution" that college campuses (as well as the country in general) were experiencing was a far cry from life at the little Baptist school, where the sexual revolution was barely a skirmish.

I have always thought I had the best of both worlds: a good grounding of conservative values as well as exposure to a more liberal attitude toward what is right and wrong in the world.

So when the winds of autumn blow past my window and the memories of those years wrapped in the insulated world of academia fill my mind, I remember a verse of a little poem I wrote for one of my classes so many years ago:

Autumn rest softly in our memories,
And golden days and blue-lit nights sprinkle stardust
In a thousand different eyes.

Bill Thompson is a speaker and author who lives just down the road, in nearby Hallsboro.

Homer's Odyssey

Chicken two ways and a conversation on life after tragedy

By Dana Sachs

Ask Melodie Homer how she defines herself and she'll say, "I'm a mom, a nursing instructor, I run a foundation, I'm an aviation safety activist, and I'm an author." For the past thirteen years, though, the world has identified her as "9/11 Widow." Homer's husband, LeRoy Homer, was a pilot on United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed into a field outside of Shanksville, Pennsylvania, on September 11, 2001. Melodie tells the story of her loss and recovery in her memoir, *From Where I Stand: Flight #93's Pilot's Widow Sets the Record Straight.*

References to the tragedy regularly swirl through American culture. We see the "Never Forget" bumper stickers, receive news updates on the rebuilding of Ground Zero, and hear politicians refer to the attacks during legislative arguments about national security. For Melodie Homer, and other members of victims' families, the public tragedy intersects with their private ones, and these unexpected reminders can stir painful memories. In her book, Melodie describes the night she heard a mention of "the planes [hitting] the Twin Towers" while she was watching a romantic comedy, of all things. She realized at that moment "that I would always be surrounded by references to September 11."

Melodie, who moved with her two children from New Jersey to Wilmington in 2011, met me for lunch at Hops Supply Co. In person, she's warm but slightly wary and, once we started to talk, I began to understand why. After LeRoy's death, Melodie explained, media outlets besieged her with requests for interviews. "They've called my parents' house in Canada looking for me. They've called my church," she said. She's been stalked, and she's received hate mail from people who say that the September 11 attacks were a hoax. Even in the course of her daily life, she's had a hard time getting away from what happened. Once, while picking up take-out at a restaurant in New Jersey, Melodie gave her name to the person taking orders. Hearing her say "Homer," another customer responded, "Oh, I hope you're not related to *that* Homer."

Melodie thought, "Here I am, spreading my black cloud around even when I go to do my errands."

To try to put the past behind her, Melodie decided that she and her two children would leave New Jersey. "I Googled 'Where is a good place to raise a family in the U.S.?' and Wilmington came up." For Thanksgiving vacation in 2009, the Homers came down for a visit. The city seemed nice, but she wasn't sure that it was right for them. Then, while they were eating Thanksgiving dinner at the Pilot House, her little boy had a tantrum. "I told him he couldn't have dessert until he'd finished his dinner," she explained, "and he didn't like that."

So, there was Melodie, a single mom alone with two children, their holi-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

day in disarray, and one of her kids howling so loud that the noise disturbed the whole restaurant.

Amid the howling, a woman appeared at their table.

"She sat down next to my son," Melodie told me, "and in this very calm voice she spoke to him and helped him quiet down."

At that moment, Melodie decided to move to Wilmington. "People just seemed kind. The pace slowed down," she said. The next day, she called a realtor and started looking at homes.

Hops is a big restaurant with discreet corners for quiet conversation. The menu ranges from innovative salad combinations to tried-and-true burgers, the beef ground right in the kitchen. We started with the tostada-style BBQ braised short rib nachos — layers of tender meat, black bean corn relish, tomatoes, green onions, and jalapeños over crispy chips, topped with melted cheese and served with sour cream. Melodie, a dainty eater who can manage nachos with a knife and fork, said, "I would get this again."

Grilled chicken salad is often bland and uninspired, but Hops serves one with grapefruit and avocado and pairs it with a sweet vinaigrette that makes the dish both substantial and tasty. Not so healthy, but no less tasty, were two other dishes, Hops' signature white cheddar burger (we skipped the bacon that usually goes with it) and the daily special, chicken two ways — braised chicken and fried chicken served with sides of collard greens and mac and cheese. We liked it all but tried to be careful, too. "I want to fit into my clothes," Melodie said. We had less luck resisting the brownie sundae. Topped with crumbled pretzels and Kit Kat bars, it was huge and delicious. You want to stick to your diet? Order one for a table of six.

Though reserved and thoughtful, Melodie is very funny, too, and she finds humor in some pretty miserable situations. After September 11, for example, she received piles of letters from prisoners who, apparently, wanted to date her. "That's what I'm going to do?" she can remember asking herself. "I'm going to have a long-distance relationship with a felon?"

Over time, Melodie has found a way to balance her private life with a public effort to do good in the world. That's why she agreed to meet me for lunch. Not long after September 11, she established the LeRoy W. Homer Jr. Foundation, which offers scholarships to young people wishing to pursue careers as pilots. She also works with the wives of other 9/11 pilots to promote legislation to install secondary cockpit doors in commercial airlines. "Even before 9/11, the pilots all knew those doors were ridiculous," Melodie told me, adding that she considers the current door-locking system insufficient as well. She hopes that speaking out will help produce change. "I would rather do that," she told me, "than see other people go through what we've gone through."

In *From Where I Stand*, Melodie shares her personal perspective on a national tragedy, describes her process of healing, and, perhaps most importantly, offers a testament to the love she shared with LeRoy, a dedicated traveler, fine pilot, loving husband, and devoted father. The story just might break your heart.

For years after LeRoy's death, Melodie dreamed that he returned from a trip and walked through the door of their house in New Jersey. Recently, she told me, the dream changed. "LeRoy still came home after a trip, but this time it was to my house here in Wilmington."

And, these days, she considers it a sign of her recovery that she can separate herself from the tragedy. "That's not who I am," she says. "That's just something that happened to me."

Melodie Homer's memoir, *From Where I Stand*, is available at local bookstores and online. For information about the Leroy W. Homer Jr. Foundation and its scholarships, please visit leroyhomer.org. Hops Supply Company is located at 5400 Oleander Drive in Wilmington. For information, call (910) 833-8867 or visit www.hopssupplycompany.com.

Dana Sachs' latest novel, The Secret of the Nightingale Palace, *is available at bookstores throughout Wilmington.*

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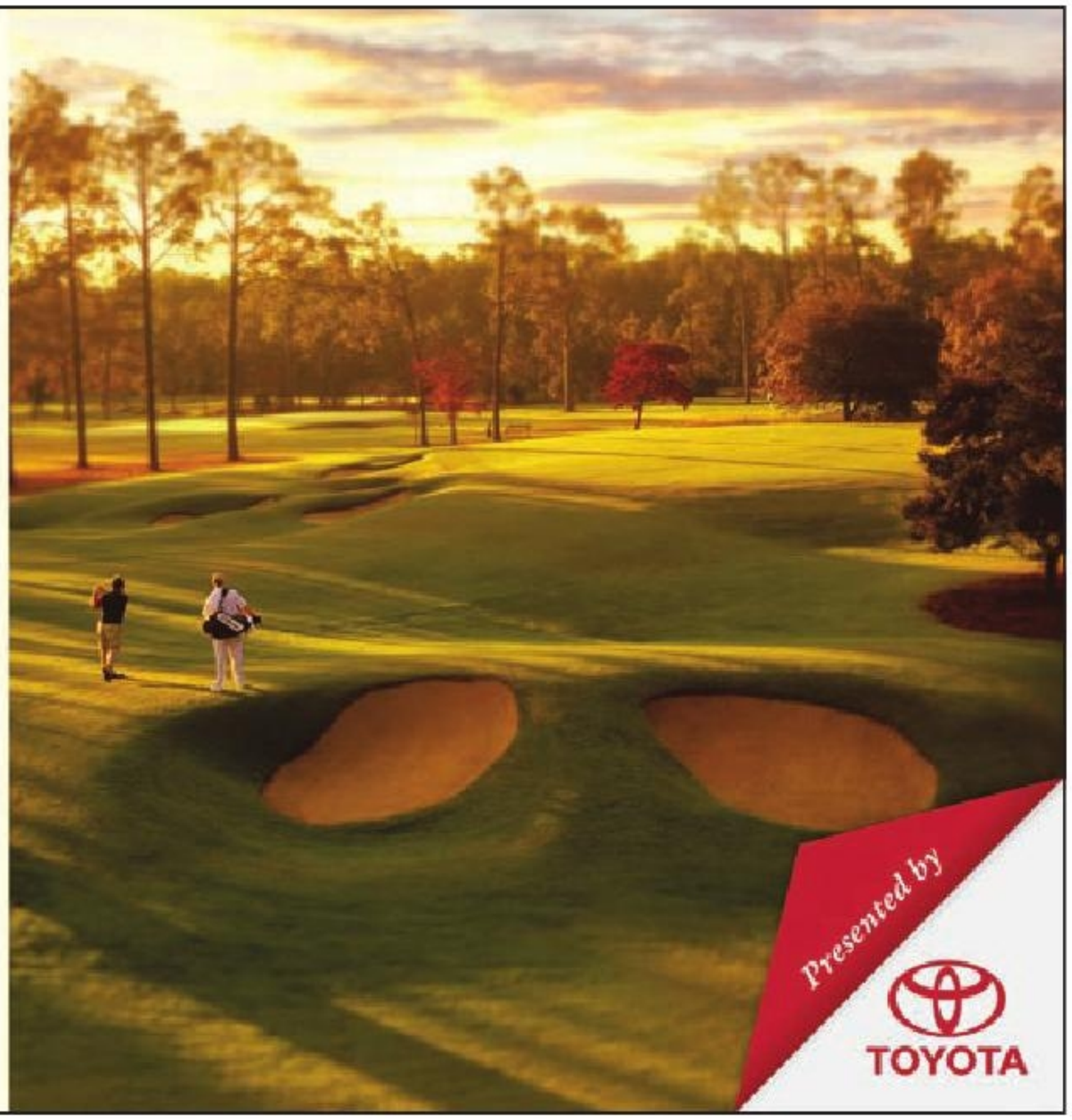

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Northern Harrier

Autumn on the wing

By Susan Campbell

Each year, the first sight of a northern harrier coursing over a wide open field is the indication that fall has truly arrived. These large raptors, also known by their old-time name as marsh hawks, migrate during daylight hours, traveling on prevailing northerly winds during August and September. They fly thousands of miles from their breeding territories in the upper Midwest and the boreal forests of Canada to large grassy habitats throughout the southern United States and Central America to spend the cooler months.

The long tail, long wings and white rump of a harrier are characteristic and unmistakable. Interestingly, unlike other hawks found in our coastal marshes, the sexes look quite different. Females have a dark, mottled dorsal surface that is mostly brown and a tail that is barred with brown and black bands. The face is streaked with brown as well. Somewhat smaller, males have a gray head, back and upper chest. Both have white under-parts, the female being streaked with brown whereas the male sports rusty streaking.

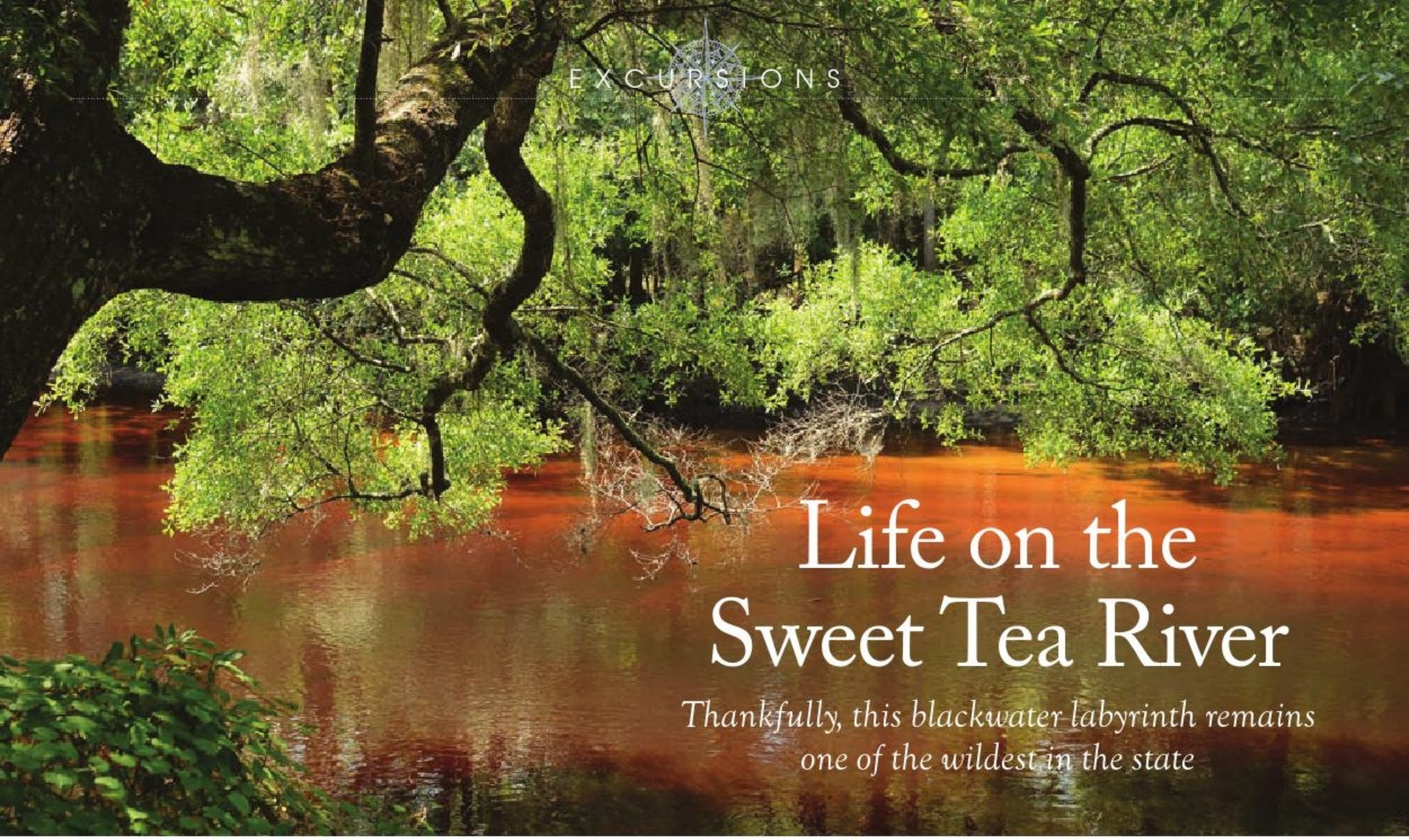
Since harriers not only rely on sight but sound to find their prey — much like owls — the whisker-like hairs on its face are stiff and create a "facial disc" to amplify and direct sound toward its ears.

Northern harriers eat mainly rodents: mice, rats — even small rabbits and squirrels. In wet areas, they have been known to drown larger prey such as ducks. Typically they fly very slowly above the ground, looking and listening for prey on outstretched wings that form a slight "V" not unlike that of a turkey vulture. These birds, with their significant wingspan, require open areas to forage. Grasslands, prairies, marshes or riparian areas are likely harrier habitat. Anywhere in the Coastal Plain region of North Carolina you might see an individual flying over open farmland or small airfields, but you're more likely to see one soaring over brackish or saltwater marshes.

In the winter months, northern harriers tend to congregate in locations where food is abundant. In larger fields and marshlands, a dozen or more birds can be seen floating around during the day. They will share the habitat with other hawks such as red-taileds, who are also searching for small rodents; or vultures, who are literally sniffing out carrion. Furthermore, these same fields may host owls when the sun goes down. Short-eared owls, another winter visitor that breeds farther north, hunt much the same way that harriers do. Even though our open areas are relatively sparse, more than one species of raptor may still be present.

Not unlike sparrows and meadowlarks found in open country, northern harriers are not as common along our coast as they once were. And with more and more wetland being lost in the area, they are likely to become more scarce in the years to come. Seeing one of these majestic, soaring birds is a reminder: We must protect our coastline and grassy habitats. Sandy beaches are valuable — but grasslands, for these handsome winter visitors, are simply priceless.

Susan would love to hear from you. Send wildlife sightings and photos to susan@ncaves.com or call (910) 949-3207.



Life on the Sweet Tea River

Thankfully, this blackwater labyrinth remains one of the wildest in the state

By Virginia Holman

"Down on the Lumbee River
Where the eddies ripple cool
Your boat, I know, glides stealthily
About some shady pool.
The summer's heats have lulled asleep
The fish-hawk's chattering noise,
And all the swamp lies hushed about
You sunburnt boys."

North Carolina poet John Charles McNeill penned those words about his beloved river almost 115 years ago. Though the river was then formally known as the Lumber River, McNeill was galled by the updated version. "She is a tortuous, delicious flirt," he wrote, "but she does not deserve the punishment put upon her by geographers, who have perverted her sweet Indian name of 'Lumbee' into something that suggests choking sawdust, rotting slabs, and the shrill scream of the circular saw." Derived from a Siouan word that means "dark waters," Lumbee sounds like the slow-moving river itself, dreamy and sonorous, and it's easy to understand McNeill's poetic stance. Fortunately, the name Lumbee lives on as the name of North Carolina's largest Native American tribe, and among a stalwart few who refuse to call the river anything else.

This blackwater river (a bit of a misnomer, as blackwater rivers often have a reddish tint) begins as Drowning Creek near the border of Montgomery and Moore counties in the Sandhills region of North Carolina. Twenty million years ago the Sandhills region was the coast of North Carolina, and the Lumber's geographic origins are visible in the numerous wide white sandbars that adorn its banks, quite unlike any other river in the state. Many people call it "the sweet tea river" because of the stunning contrast of its sugary white banks and amber, tannin-stained water. The riverbed is sand-covered as well, and currents have cratered and scalloped these shifting sands into something resembling the surface of the moon.

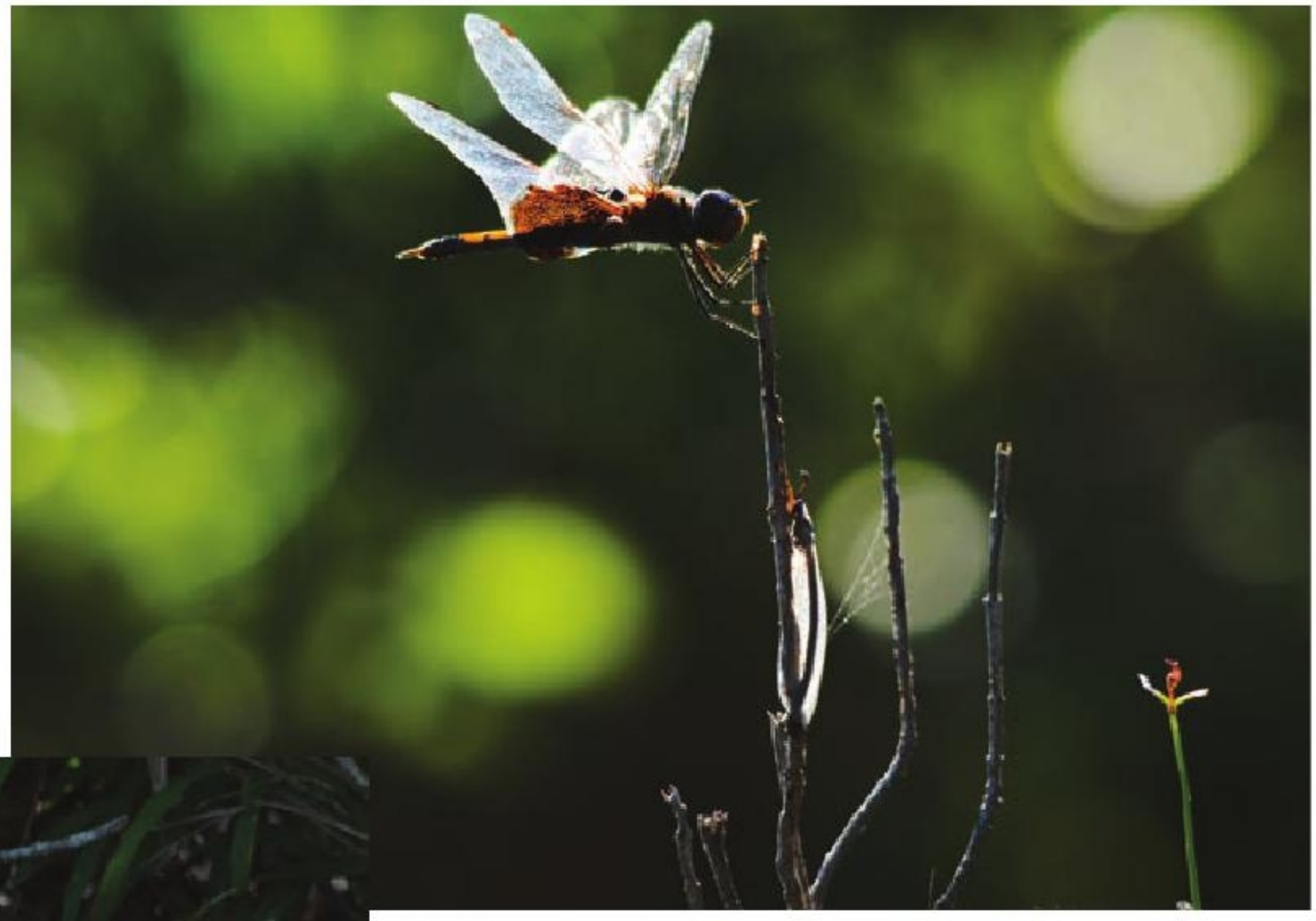
I recently spent a day with friends along the Lumber, paddling the section from Princess Ann to Fair Bluff, and we saw several four-foot-long gar swim upriver past our boats clear as day. Later, we watched a young beaver pop its head from the water. After it slipped underwater, we watched as it swirled and writhed beneath the surface, to the delight of our group. The water clarity is exceptional, and in many places a fisherman can wade in as deep as his waist and still see his toes.

The river is most easily explored by canoe, kayak or paddle board as the shallows prove daunting to motorboats. And it's best to paddle with an experienced group or guide: The river at times becomes a labyrinth, one that branches off into oxbows and duckweed-slick sloughs. In addition, last year's ice storms left numerous downfallen trees. Yet those who take the time to paddle the Lumber have access to an increasingly rare wilderness experience, a day spent far from the mechanized hum of civilization.

On my recent trip, I found the river altered my perception of time. Drifting along the water, often out of cell phone range, minutes stretched until they became long, thin, golden filaments of sunlight, and I quickly became nostalgic for more youthful, idle days spent fishing and daydreaming. Occasionally, the bow of my boat broke a spider's web, a reminder that no human had passed this way for a little while. To give a day, to lose a day, exploring the Lumber is to become part of the river itself.

Unlike many other remote rivers, the Lumber offers access to landlubbers, too. It's easy to explore the river wilderness by foot along trails in the Lumber River State Park, or along the River Walk in the small community of Fair Bluff. This elegant mile-long structure, suspended twenty feet above the riverbanks,

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIRGINIA HOLMAN



runs through a swamp forest of loblolly, cypress and tupelo gum. Built by local volunteers with grant money from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, a trust funded by tobacco settlement monies to assist businesses and farmers in regions "displaced from tobacco-related employment," the River Walk has helped transform Fair Bluff from a farming community to an eco-tourist attraction. Both its height and waterfront location make it a terrific spot for bird watching. From the walkway I have seen kingfishers, wild turkeys, barred owls, little blue and great blue herons, red-tailed hawks, downy woodpeckers and a wide variety of warblers. Fall is a wonderful time to view migrating species. In the cooler months, bolder visitors may decide to venture off the end of the boardwalk to ramble along an old logging road, but the Visitors' Center cautions to avoid leaving the walkway during the warmer months due to snakes. The walkway's designers included dedicated picnic areas, so it's easy to pack a lunch and linger awhile.

Visitors to the River Walk should also stop in at the Fair Bluff Visitors' Center. There you will learn that the Lumber River is southeastern North Carolina's best-preserved river, so much so that it is designated a National Wild and Scenic River. This important federal designation has been awarded to fewer than one-quarter of one percent of all rivers in the United States, and the Lumber River is the only blackwater river with Wild and Scenic status. The status allows the river to remain free-flowing from manmade obstructions such as dams, it disallows hydropower development in areas that may impact the river, and it confers stringent protections for the riparian corridor, including its tributaries, swamps and surrounding land.

That's a fine thing, as North Carolina has seen wanton and indiscriminate development in the past fifty years, and too often the price has been permanent destruction of our state's natural resources. As I type the phrase "natural resources," I see that it's an idea that's easy to breeze past without serious consideration — in many ways it's an economic term, and too often one that has come to mean "how can we profit from nature?" When I look around, it's easy to see how comparatively little thought has been given to conserving our natural resources. Fecal contamination from industrial hog and chicken farms is a major pollutant in North Carolina rivers. Mercury contamination from heavy industry is sequestered in our fish. Unlined coal ash ponds leach poison into the groundwater. When I view the systematic ruin of these natural resources in this way, I find I'm overwhelmed. It's hard for me to imagine that my small voice matters or that I can have any significant effect. Then I am reminded of noted author and architect Buckminster Fuller's take on the role of the individual. It's a quote that a friend of mine adopted as her credo, and it rightly notes the power within each of us. "Something hit me very hard once," Fuller said, "thinking about what one little man could do. Think of the *Queen Mary* — the whole ship goes by and then comes the rudder. And there's a tiny thing at the edge of the rudder called a trim tab. It's a miniature rudder. Just moving the little trim tab builds a low pressure that pulls the rudder around. Takes almost no effort at all. So I said that the little individual can be a trim tab. Society thinks it's going right by you, that it's left you altogether. But if you're doing dynamic things mentally, the fact is that you can just put your foot out like that and the whole big ship of

state is going to go. So I said, call me Trim Tab."

After my visit to Fair Bluff, I was curious about conservation efforts along the Lumber by individuals and small organizations that are acting as trim tabs. I spoke with Christine Ellis, who serves as a River Advocate for the Winyah Rivers Foundation. The Foundation monitors five rivers, including the Lumber, that drain into the Winyah basin near Georgetown, South Carolina. She says that the Lumber River in North Carolina has two rather pressing concerns: cleaning up the coal ash ponds at Duke Energy's decommissioned Weatherspoon power plant, and preventing hydraulic fracturing near the river's headwaters. Ellis says that Duke Energy simply wants to cap the coal slurry that fills an unlined containment pond along the riverbanks, while the foundation wants the ash dewatered, "dug up and removed to an appropriately lined pond so that nothing leaches to the groundwater. Unfortunately, it is not currently slated for clean-up by the state." Ellis says she's concerned about the ponds' potential for large-scale contamination of the river. Common byproducts of coal-ash combustion include arsenic, selenium, mercury and lead, heavy metals that are not only carcinogens, but that tend to stay in the food chain for many years. "The foundation is working with the Southern Environmental Law Center to work toward a more robust bill to deal with coal ash."

In addition, Ellis says the foundation is now dealing with "the potential of hydraulic fracturing in Cumberland-Marlboro basin, the basin that is closest to the coast and is the area that is designated as an area of opportunity for fracking." She says that there are grave concerns about hydraulic fracturing near the headwaters and the surrounding aquifer, because pollutants released upstream travel downstream. What pollutants? No one knows. In North Carolina companies are not required to release information about the chemicals permanently injected into the ground during fracking.

I'm unsettled after I speak with Ellis, and then I remember that there's cause for optimism. That's because there are individuals like Ellis, like the volunteers who built the River Walk, people who know that natural resources endure when they are nurtured and sustained for all of us, rather than exploited for the financial gain of a few. Perhaps, with sustained effort by those of us who love the Lumber, future North Carolinians will turn a corner along the "sweet tea river" and see, as I have, John Charles McNeill's sunburnt boys still arranged in their timeless tableau.

Interested in Protecting the Lumber?

Southern Environmental Law Center, www.southernenvironment.org
Winyah Rivers Foundation, www.winyahrivers.org

Want to Visit?

Numerous Wilmington-based outfitters offer kayak, canoe and paddle board trips on the Lumber River.

Paddle NC, www.paddlenc.com, 910-612-3277

Watersmith Kayaking, www.watersmithkayaking.com, (910) 805-2517

Mahanaim Adventures, www.mahanaimadventures.com, (910) 547-8252

Lumber River State Park, 2819 Princess Ann Road, Orrum, NC, lumber.river@ncparks.gov , (910) 628-4564; (910) 628-5643

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Author Virginia Holman teaches in the creative writing department at UNC Wilmington and occasionally guides with Kayak Carolina.

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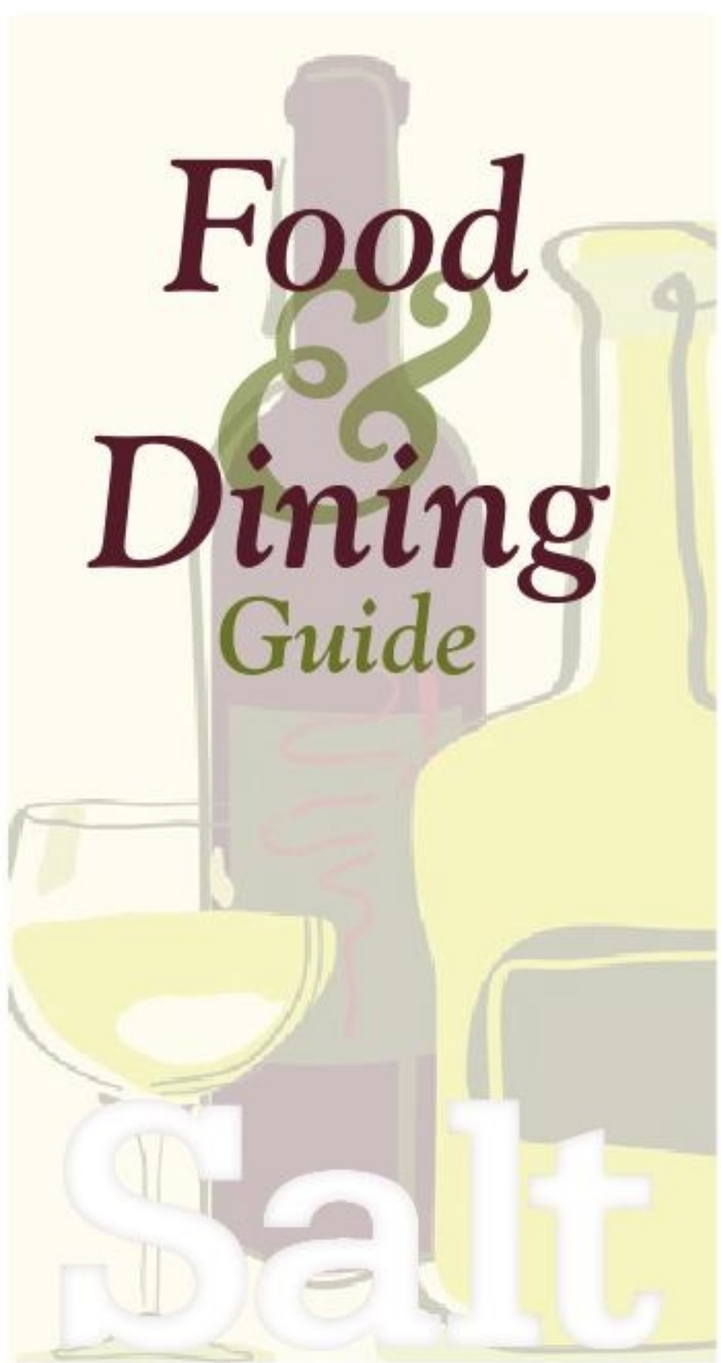

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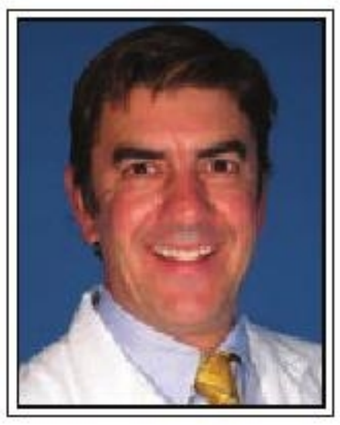

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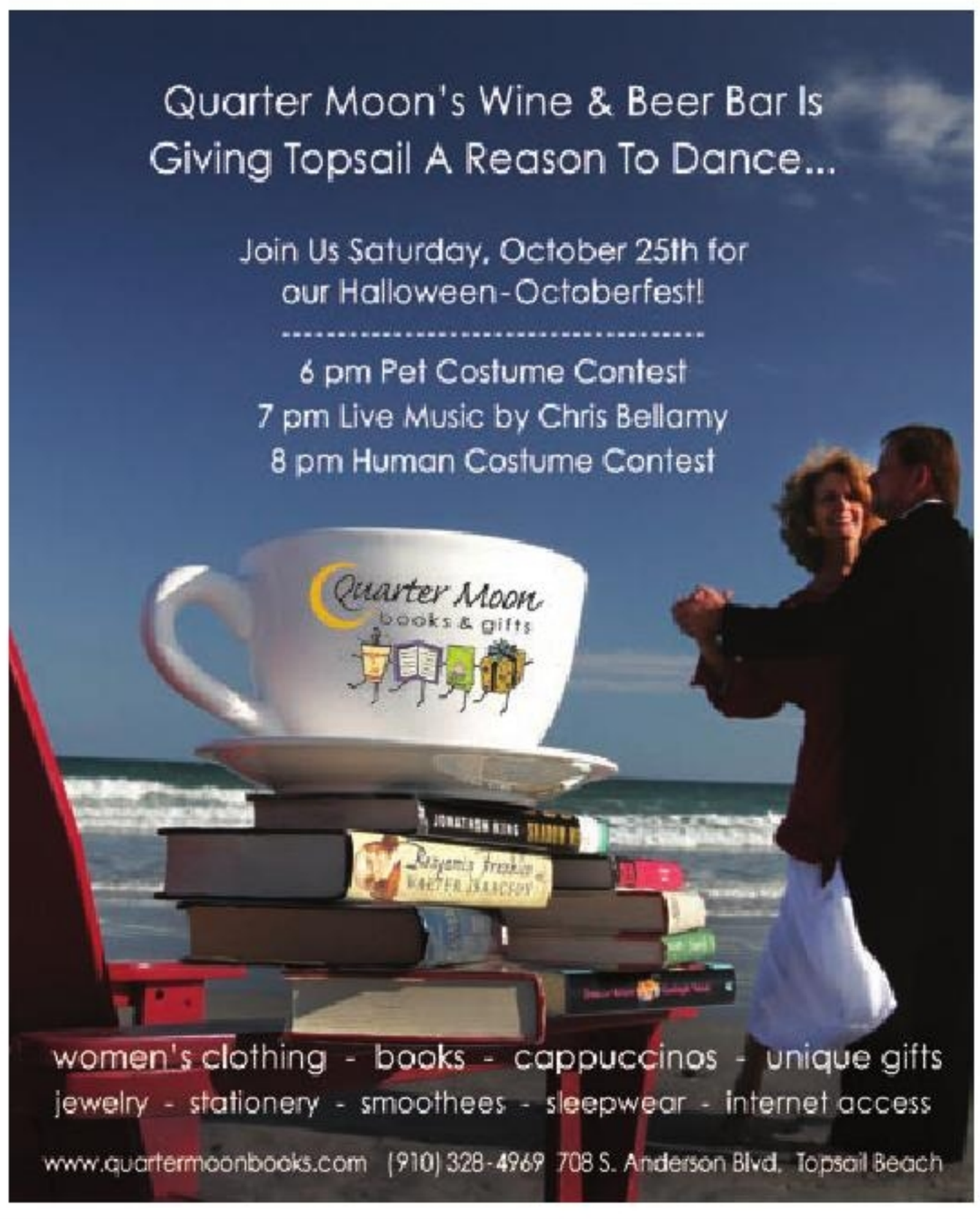
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Money won't go as far.

– *Shelby Stephenson*

Ladies of the Craft

Megan Loux

By Jason Frye

Photographs by Brownie Harris

Craft beer is here. OK, technically it's been in Wilmington for a while — Front Street Brewery has been pouring pints since '95 and I've been going to Cape Fear Wine and Beer (CFWB) for more than a decade — but now, craft beer is coming on stronger than ever. The Lighthouse Beer Festival sells out every year and outgrows its venue every other. Dive bars (and the former dive bars turned hipster hideaways, you know who you are) stock up on craft beers, imports, and, of course, PBR. Grocery stores have almost as much North Carolina beer as they do Budweiser. And, finally, Wilmington's brewing scene is growing with the arrival of Wilmington Homebrew Supply and a number of independent breweries and tap houses slated to open in the next year.

The changes and additions continue to broaden the customer base and expand the scope of and attitude toward beer consumption. For a long while — too long, really — beer has been a man's drink, a flavorless, belch-inducing, piss-yellow drink for frat boys and football tailgates and to signal the end of a hard day's work. Look at *Cheers*. No female beer drinkers to speak of and only one female character — Carla — who did nothing more with beer other than slide a mug of suds across the bar to her all-male regulars.

If you look around any bar, you'll find more women opting for beer. Look closer and you'll find a handful of female bartenders who know their way around beer like a sommelier knows her way around wine (which is also a male-dominated industry). Look even closer and you'll find female brewers, few though they are.

Megan Loux, Cicerone Certified Beer Server at CFWB, and Kelsie Cole, Assistant Brewer at Front Street Brewery, have something to say about being a woman in the man's world of beer.

Megan Loux: Cape Fear Wine and Beer

It's noisy here, and aggressive, barbaric even. There are swords on the wall and a battle axe hangs behind the bar. A caribou head. A coat of arms logo. On any given night, there's 500 square feet of beard in here.

Megan Loux, 27, seamlessly moves amid the noise in a narrow space behind the bar like she was born to it. Patrons call out their orders and she pivots, retrieves bottles from the cooler behind her, pops the tops and passes them across the bar. As soon as the bottles are out of her hands, she's pointing at the next customer, taking an order and pouring the first pint before they're finished talking. It's like this all night. And the whole time, she's cheerful, attentive, quick with a recommendation and, above all, professional.

She remembers my name, knows what I like, and is ready to show off her passion and knowledge with a sample of something that will challenge or delight my palate. Why? It's because she's a pro, because she loves beer, and because there's a bias in the bar industry that sets the roles like this: there's the gruff, muscled, male bartender and the friendly, attractive waitress.

"The aspects of gender that exist in bar culture are multifaceted," Loux says by way of explaining why she pushes to excel at her job.

"We're all Cicerone Certified Beer Servers here, and that means we've displayed expert-level knowledge about beer. [For female bartenders] it levels the playing field and puts our beer brains, and not our gender, on the line," she says.

Loux's expertise shows in the way she can rattle off the characteristics of hops varietals in everything CFWB serves, expound on the differences distinguishing Belgian beer styles from one another, and discern a customer's taste and make a recommendation based on just a few questions.

Her enthusiasm for beer started early, when she learned that when her dad said "beer" he meant Dogfish Head, not Miller.

"The turning point came at the end of college. I went home with a friend, his dad was a home brewer and I spent the whole trip with his dad, learning the basics of home brewing. It was a 'Whoa, you can *make* that?' moment."

Soon she brewed her first batch and found herself hooked, awash in a sea of craft brews.

In her years at CFWB, Loux has seen an uptick in the number of women who patronize (or, for the purpose of this article, matronize?) the bar, representing a slight shift in the customer demographic, which runs about 70/30 men to women. But she's seen a more dramatic change in the consumption habits of her female clientele.

"More women order beer now. They've found what they like and they order a pint as opposed to a glass of wine. Strangely, I see many men getting the more wine-like brews: ciders, meads and barley wines. It's interesting," says Loux.

Loux believes one contributing factor to the increase in female beer consumption is the incredible variety of styles, flavors and brands available in today's beer market. More styles and more flavors relate to more palates, and suddenly the world of beer is opened to new consumers, female and male.

"Beer isn't just beer anymore," she says. "Wit beers, especially fruity ones like strawberry or orange wits, weren't available just a few years ago. Now this style is removing the stereotypical sour beer stigma and introducing flavors the new consumers can actually enjoy."

In the same way Loux challenges me to try something with a bolder hop characteristic, she likes to challenge the "I don't like beer" girls.

"I try to find out what they like or don't like, then pour them a taste or get them a bottle. Every time they're like 'Oh shit, this beer is good, it's so *flavorful*.' I feel like I've opened a door for them."

Kelsie Cole: Front Street Brewery

In some ways, it's as if Kelsie Cole, 24, works in a zoo, as an exhibit. As assistant brewer, she spends a good deal of her time in the brewing room, a glass-walled enclosure on the first floor of Front Street Brewery, on display for passersby and patrons alike. It's noisy in here, the air filled with the sounds of diners chatting and eating, glasses clinking, music playing, all amplified by the tin ceiling overhead and then again by the room where she works.

Cole's first step on the path to brewing beer began when she was 18, a freshman at UNCW hired on as a hostess at Front Street Brewery. She learned the menu and the work routine and was moved up to server. At 21, when she started drinking the beer she was serving, there was an awakening.

"I saw the work that went into brewing the beer and I'd snuck a drink here and there, so I had some appreciation for the flavors, but when I was able to sit down and really taste, really savor what was going on in the glass, I wanted to be involved," she says.

This revelation turned her plans for using her degree — in business and marketing — on their head. No longer was she interested in just marketing the beer, she was interested in getting her hands dirty and making some herself. So she sought advice from the brewer and former assistant brewer.

"Then I brewed my first batch and it was a disaster. Oh, it tasted OK, as OK as a first attempt is going to taste, but the fight I had with my boyfriend was the problem. Now I tell people, 'Don't brew with your significant other the first time.'"

That first brew, which she called Homewrecker Pale Ale, ignited something in Cole, and she began to study homebrew techniques until, eventually, the assistant brewer left and she was able to move up, abandoning serving beer for brewing it.

Cole sees challenges in her male-dominant industry, but she says her mutual passion for beer makes getting along with her peers pretty easy. The challenge she sees is in the physical aspect.

"People don't think it is, but brewing beer is an exhausting process," she says. "We get in a ton of malts every week or two, and often I have to lift, push, pull and carry every ounce of it to the third floor. I've done it with a sprained wrist, with the help of the elevator, and even bag by bag, carrying them up the stairs until the job's done. So, yeah, that and lifting kegs are the only areas where I see that men have an advantage. Otherwise it's about the way you blend passion, knowledge and experience to make a great beer."

Part of Cole's job is to assist the Head Brewer. That means crawling in the tanks to scrub them clean ("I think sometimes I was hired because I fit in the tank hatch," she jokes, gesturing at her petite frame), carrying malt deliveries, bottling, and, now that she's proven herself, taking the time to explore her own recipes.

Her first official brew happened in late July when she was able to produce that inaugural recipe. A vocal fan of Founders Centennial IPA, she was surprised to find that her brewer had ordered 22 pounds of Centennial hops so she could produce her first beer, a tasty offering on Front Street Brewery's Single Hop Series.

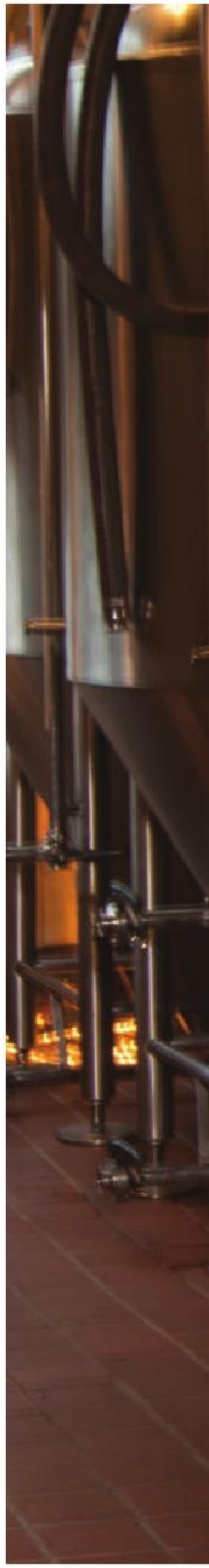
"I've been so nervous," Cole says. "I'm smelling it, pouring off a little to sample and test. I was really worried about it at first, then I realized that I have to put myself out there if I want to grow and learn what actually works."

Cole sees what works through the network of female beer professionals she's part of. The Pink Boots Society (PBS) is open to all females in the beer industry, from servers to sales reps to bottle shop owners to brewers. With more than two thousand PBS members nationwide, that puts Cole in an elite group, especially as an assistant brewer.

At a recent conference she and fifty of her Pink Boots peers were able to attend a talk by Kim Jordan, co-founder and CEO of New Belgium Brewing. Cole called the moment, "humbling and inspiring." Closer to home, she's seeing more women getting into the beer game. Margo Metzger is the new Executive Director of the North Carolina Craft Brewers Guild.

"It's exciting to see [Margo] as director. She's helping beer as a whole, but also helping women succeed in this industry. Hopefully she'll help inspire other women to get involved.

"Beer is changing," Cole says. "There are more than 140 recognized styles of beer, so we're opening doors to a lot of new beer consumers, male and female. The stigma that it's a 'man's drink' is falling away, which just means great things ahead."



Kelsie Cole

Finding No Boundaries

Crashing an artist colony for an evening

Story and Photographs by Joel Finsel

At the eastern tip of the Cape Fear coast, where the northern and southern currents collide, the surf forms sideways rather than parallel to the shore — the waves project outward from the beach in a line that almost seems palpable, as if you could walk along it, like a path. Some people think this point gave the Cape Fear its name, since so many ships would wreck on the sandbar there.

I had come to Bald Head Island to learn about No Boundaries, an international artists' colony, but was lost. The tram driver had taken me to the wrong house, leaving me alone on a stranger's porch just before dark. I rang the bell and a disheveled man came to peer at me from behind the glass. "Hello," I said, "are you the chef?"

He looked at me with raised eyebrows.

Somewhat desperate, I held up my Moleskine as credentials. "I'm a journalist covering the artist colony," I explained. "I'm sorry. I was told I'd be staying with the chef."

Something in my eyes must have let him know I was something other than the horror-story villain who shows up at your vacation house in the off-season just after you and your wife have settled in for the evening. Or possibly he was just bored and looking for a touch of adventure. He drove me to the old lighthouse keepers' cottages, where the artists stayed. Someone there would know where to put the outsiders like me.

Many artist colonies are like Utopian experiments where creatives live and interact with one another. Those not invited tend to shrug them off as a bunch of lucky people able to escape the status quo for some time in paradise while the rest of us continue to suffer. But the story of No Boundaries is more daring than that.

It began in 1993 when a Wilmington painter named Pam Toll traveled to an artist colony in Macedonia. The country had just been formed two years before. Toll had a friend who'd studied there and come back full of stories about the fresh enthusiasm surrounding the arts. Macedonia had thirteen arts colonies, the woman said. Toll applied, and months later found herself at an 800-year-old monastery in the Osogovo Mountains, about seven miles from today's Bulgarian border.

Living among the Macedonian people, Toll says, she felt as if she had been removed from time. Men walked their goats into town. She discovered that a hike through the hills meant multiple invitations to sit and sip rakija, a brandy made from a variety of native herbs and fruit. She left with an impression of having been initiated into an international tribe of artists, many from countries still at war with each other — Serbia, Kosovo, Albania. If they could live together and inspire each other, then peace seemed possible.

Toll was twice asked to return to the Osogovo colony in subsequent years, and to bring another American artist with her. She first invited Gayle Tustin, a painter friend from Wilmington. "Pam and I were in a painting group together before she went on the first trip," Tustin says, "and I saw a huge change in her when she came back." The next year Toll brought along local painter Dick Roberts, a co-founder of Acme Arts Studios. Afterward, in talking, the three painters realized that the experience in Macedonia had profoundly affected each of their lives. It was then, in the mid-'90s, that they started dreaming up the concept of No Boundaries.

The question became location — where to place their particular thumbtack on a world map of similar enclaves. Nearby, picturesque, and relatively undeveloped, Bald Head Island already offered retreats for solo artists (Toll had been awarded one there too). And she knew the president of the island's

Fritzi Huber

Kristi Gibson

Nkurunziza Innocent

Gayle Tustin

Jonathan Summit

Weihong

management company, Kent Mitchell, from swimming at the YMCA. Mitchell happens to be an architect with a drawing habit. They struck a deal. Bald Head would transport the artists to the old lighthouse keeper's station and give them accommodation in the three cottages there. In return, each artist would leave behind one painting per week of their residency.

Toll, Tustin and Roberts met weekly for a year to manage the details. "We knew we were never going to make money," Tustin said. "We considered it to be one drop in the sea for world peace." Sixteen years later, painters from all over the world have done stays at No Boundaries. If every artist's journey to the colony were represented by a different colored thread on the map, the end design would be a multi-layered tapestry.

Last year marked a turning point in the history of the colony. The founders — Toll, Tustin and Roberts — stepped down, and a new president, Michelle Connolly, took over. Connolly is a Wilmington artist with roots in both England and Australia, the perfect No Boundaries blend of international and local. With the change in leadership, the format has changed a little, too. The colony now invites international artists every year, rather than biannually. But the founding spirit remains. "There are literally no boundaries," Connolly said."It's funny how often we repeat the saying, but it's true."

I thought of one. "What about the rest of the community?" I asked. "Are there boundaries against people visiting who aren't a part of the colony?"

"We encourage the public to come," she said, "especially during the open-studio day. Visitors are welcome other times, but there's no guarantee the artists won't all be out painting in the marshes. It takes some doing to get there, but that's not because they are trying to keep people out. In fact, we invited an entire class from DREAMS [Center for Arts Education in Wilmington] to come out last year and spend the day with the artists."

When I posed the same question to Tustin, she said, "No Boundaries is remote on purpose, but more to give the artists space to make breakthroughs than to keep other people away."

The artists arrive to find the floors of the three modest houses of Captain Charlie's Station covered with plastic, to keep the paint off the floor. The structures take their name from lighthouse keeper Charles Swan, whose family and staff occupied the government-issue buildings between 1903 and 1933, back when supplies had to be air-lifted in by planes landing on the beach at low tide. The entire layout looks to be about the size of one of the neighboring mansions visible from the beach.

Each artist stakes out his or her own place to work and sleep. They live communally for two weeks. Dinner is provided, but for most of the rest of the time they are on their own. It's a fascinating Petri dish to observe. When I was there, applicants had come from as far away as Indonesia, Australia and Rwanda. Styles ranged from primitive and outsider, to figurative and abstract. The close quarters force exchanges, resulting in a cultural cross-pollination. As someone crashing the party midway, I felt a little like I was walking onto the set of a reality show in the middle of the season without having watched a single episode.

The first artist I met was Brandon Guthrie, who welcomed me onto the porch with a smile. He offered me a beer, and we sat down on rocking chairs to stare at the moon's reflection melting into the sea.

Guthrie said that before coming to the island he'd felt burnt out, artistically. He'd been making a lot of similar work for weeks on end. He had also recently become chair of the Humanities and Fine Arts Department at Cape Fear Community College. He welcomed the added responsibilities but said it was "nice to set them aside a while."

"Something about coming out here," he said, "it's like opening up all the windows in your body and letting fresh air in."

Guthrie described how strange it felt to be around so many people who liked to talk about abstract ideas as if they were normal topics of conversation. "We tend to hold back from those types of discussions in ordinary life," he said. "Out here, it's the kind of medicine people need. It's important work, definitely not a vacation."

Inside the cottage, a group of five or six other artists were passing around a book of Leonard Cohen's poetry and taking turns reading poems out loud. After listening for a few minutes I decided to walk into the kitchen and say hello to the chef, who was supposed to be my roommate. To my surprise, he turned out to be a friend I'd known for years (Jameson Chavez, the head cook at Manna, where I tend bar). Having watched him cook a hundred times, I could tell by the way he smashed the butternut squash that something was different about him. He was taking his time.

As the artist assigned to be his kitchen helper poured us each a glass of wine, I asked the chef what was up. He responded that this was his first day off in weeks. When he'd woken up that morning knowing he would have to travel all the way here to cook for a group of strangers, he hadn't felt particularly motivated to get out of bed. He had heard about No Boundaries, and knew that the colony had a tradition of inviting in chefs to cook for the artists, but he hadn't really known what to expect, and confessed that he'd almost bailed.

"But all of my gloom lifted when I arrived," he said, smiling. "Everyone has been so friendly. I haven't felt this calm in a long time."

He had been warned to prepare for having little in the way of cooking tools or spices, so he decided to keep the menu simple: roasted pork tenderloin with braised cabbage. Happy to discover a blender, he puréed red chile, onion, garlic and vegetable stock into a sauce as the rest of the artists began to arrive.

I asked the first, a painter named Jonathan Summit, about his experience so far.

"It's a gift from God," he said, sitting down next to me. "I feel like I could go anywhere in the world and know someone who is a No Boundaries alum."

Others began trickling in. Soon there were about twenty of us seated around a couple of long tables. Every time my glass of wine got dangerously close to empty, someone topped it off. After Jameson had stood and explained the menu, the rest of us cheered and clapped. I recorded over two hours of dinner conversation, but when I replayed the files, there was too much chatter, interrupted by toasts and spontaneous laughter, to render them decipherable. But I know it was an excellent night. There was a Rwandan artist, Nkurunziza Innocent, whose colorful abstract canvases and shell-totems I had seen. There was a Chinese tea master named Weihong, who had brought with her, to that remote Atlantic outpost, teacups salvaged from a shipwreck in the Pacific. Wilmington's own Harry Taylor was there, making his distinctive tintype photographs. An Indonesian artist named Jumaadi, who had a show scheduled in Charleston right after the colony closed, played the guitar and sang. It was well past midnight when the chef and I finally staggered off to our house a half-mile away.

Since its inception, No Boundaries has existed mainly for painters, but under Michelle Connolly's leadership the roster has expanded to include more filmmakers and photographers, as well as the occasional writer. The outlier slot for this fall's class will go to a singer-songwriter from Nashville named Gabriel Kelley (it's not clear yet what he will leave behind, in place of two paintings — a song?). The group arriving on Bald Head in November will include artists from Brazil, Spain, Argentina and Cuba (pending visa approval).

For anyone interested in a casual visit, Open Studio Day is Tuesday, November 18, from 2–5 p.m., at Captain Charlie's Station. Those unable to make the trek — including but not limited to those who have heard about "Cloden," the ghostly child bride said to inhabit the middle cottage — there will be an exhibition in Wilmington. The Wilma Daniels Gallery at Cape Fear Community College will open the show with a reception on November 22. Interested buyers, or anyone with an interest in art, will have a rare chance to see pieces from all over the world, made right here on our coast during two intense and transformative weeks.

Rwandan artist Nkurunziza Innocent

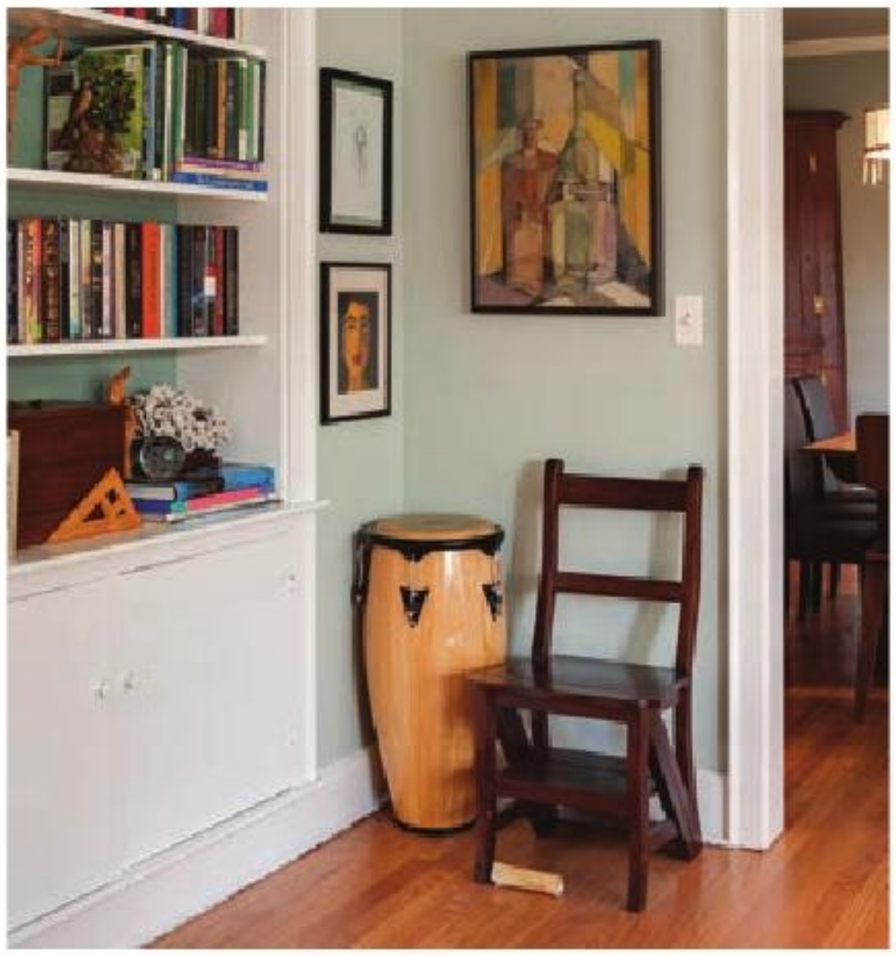
For more information about No Boundaries, or to apply to participate in next year's colony, visit www.nbiac.org.

Joel Finsel is the author of Cocktails & Conversations from the Astral Plane. *He profiled humanitarian inventor Jock Brandis in our March issue.*

The Memory Keeper

In search for a simpler life, an admitted "old house snob" transforms a modest ranch into the house of her dreams

By Ashley Wahl · Photographs by Rick Ricozzi



Ginnie Kuhn needed what she calls *tabula rasa*, a blank slate.

She was living in the former Henry Rehder estate, a 1938 Colonial Revival she bought as a "fix and flip" back in 2005, although it had ultimately become the house she and George Graves called home during their regrettably brief marriage. When George died of cancer in 2012, Ginnie decided it was time to downsize — to simplify her life by letting go of the superfluous.

"I had to do a lot of editing," says Ginnie, an avid collector who likewise has the distinctive ability to transmute anything she touches into what a Pinterest junkie might consider a DIY opus.

So when she stumbled upon the unassuming brick ranch situated on the crest of a half-acre lot near Forest Hills, a house she then described as dark but benign, Ginnie envisioned a bright space filled with natural light and only her most cherished possessions.

"I've done a lot of renovation projects," says the 59-year-old from her seat at the island table in the center of a sunny kitchen where pendant lights she fashioned from retro canisters labeled *flour*, *coffee* and *sugar* add whimsy to a tidy space stocked with vintage crockery and a cast iron installation worthy of a cookware showroom. "But this is the first house I have done just for me."

Of course, simplicity is a relative term. And while it's a stretch to say that Ginnie owns little more than the bare essentials — each room is festooned with art, photography and eclectic furnishings à la Anthropologie meets Restoration Hardware, including the two guest rooms — everything here is intimately connected to the homeowner's personal narrative. Ginnie calls it "aesthetically curated sentimentality."

When she flashes back to the Long Island farmhouses of her childhood — charming old characters with creaky bones, sloped floors and stubborn windows — she recalls her mother's knack for creating exquisite décor with items salvaged from thrift stores, junk shops and roadsides. Their black and white checkered couch, made from a piece of plywood, upholstery foam and old flue tiles, was perhaps the crowning glory.

"We had limited resources," explains Ginnie, whose father worked for *The East Hampton Star*

newspaper as an art director and illustrator. "My mom invented everything in the house."

At a young age, Ginnie recognized that her house looked nothing like the houses her peers called home — "they had things like upholstered couches and carpet," she adds — but Ginnie didn't mind.

In fact, she now admits, "I kind of liked it."

Her childhood bedrooms, both of which were tucked under eaves, were cozy spaces with steep ceilings and tiny beds, little else.

"Those bedrooms were cocoons."

As is the ranch.

"It wasn't love at first sight," says Ginnie.

Having grown up in rambling hundred-year-old homes, she'd become something of an "old house snob," enchanted as much by their quirks, histories and ghosts as their architectural grandeur. Before she met George Graves, when she was a single woman in her early 50s, she began renovating the former home and gardens of famed local florist Henry Rehder, whose spirit "guided me throughout the process," says Ginnie.

Suffice it to say that 1950s ranch wasn't exactly what she had in mind on her search for a simpler life.

But she kept coming back to it. After viewing the house three times, she "broke out the tracing paper" and began laying the groundwork for the house of her dreams.

Most of the renovations were cosmetic. She painted the exterior white, updated the kitchen and bathrooms, and with a few simple tricks, created a cozy, modern space filled with light. Walls were done in white, soft grays and muted greens. Wood floors were refinished.

"But the house had great bones."

She even kept the kitchen cabinets, solid pine, although she took off the cupboard doors and

painted the shelves white for a more modern look.

The pass-through above the sink allows Ginnie to look out through the add-on studio to the fenced-in backyard, where Moxie and Arturo (both rescues) are free to roam.

"I tend to adopt the dogs no one else wants," says Ginnie, who has loved a succession of them, all of which are memorialized by photographs and figurines near her computer, where she'll tell you she spends most of her time. "It's really edifying to give them a place where they can heal and learn to trust again."

Spend five minutes with the homeowner and understand why the studio serves as the nucleus of the house: Ginnie is a business woman.

Although she owned a retail store at Wrightsville Beach for twenty years, she has worn many hats. Her most recent endeavor is an online jewelry and accessory shop called Vintage Gin.

Inside a massive rustic cupboard — early North Carolina, salvaged from a barn — Ginnie stocks her inventory: copper jewelry by Renoir of California, souvenir scarves made with hand-rolled silk, vintage cigarette cases, and vintage-inspired pieces made by the artist in residence, including a series of bracelets made with vintage California travel maps.

Some of her handiwork is not for sale. Like her "watch dog" — the beagle-sized ceramic figure covered in glamorous watches cut from catalogs and fashion magazines. Or her "*pièce de résistance*," the drum shade chandelier above the hutch table in the dining room made from the rims of her father's bicycle and embellished with vintage crystals.

In the hallway, track lighting illuminates a gallery-like display of black and white photographs spanning from Ginnie's childhood to present-day. The effect is like something of a three-dimensional scrapbook. She points out an image of her father with the New York Cycle Club, childhood portraits taken by a former fashion editor of *The New York Times* (friend of the family), and a baby picture of her daughter sitting in the same sling chair Ginnie was propped up in as a child for a similar photo that hangs just above it. That sling chair, now covered in leather, is in the living room.

Like her parents, whose dearest companions included the likes of artist Robert "Bob" Gwathmey (friend and peer of Claude Howell), Ginnie seems to attract fellow creatives and local artists whose framed art spills from the foyer walls and into the living room. Among the collection is her father's self portrait done resourcefully on a paint by number board — "If you look closely, you can see the numbers coming through," says Ginnie — and several of his illustrations and sketches.

"My daughter bought this for me when she was in Soweto from a young girl sitting on the street," she says of a haunting portrait of a women whose eyes suggest she holds a secret.

And there are countless photographs taken by her late husband, George.

"He was an architect by trade and a photographer by passion," says Ginnie, pointing out his shots of the Virginia mountains and the sandy shores of Bald Head Island, where they were married.

In the master bedroom, a panoramic image of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge shot by local photographer Harry Taylor is mounted above the bed.

"I bought that for George," she says. Their wedding photo is displayed on an easel in a sunny corner of the room.

Despite the mementos, Ginnie lives in the moment. And when she gets to a photograph of her great-great-great-grandmother and namesake — Virginia Whiting, a rogue of a woman who toured the world as an opera singer — it is obvious that she recognizes her own strength.

"We're all mavericks," she says of herself and the women from whom she inherited her many talents, including her mother's golden touch.

Her house is testament to that.

"I love my home," says Ginnie. "I'm not worried about whether it will sell or not, because I'm not planning on going anywhere."

Growing Forward

This month, thanks in part to its many faithful volunteers, the New Hanover County Arboretum celebrates a milestone

By Linda Carol Grattafiori
Photographs by Mark Steelman

October 4, 2014, marks the 25th anniversary of the New Hanover County Arboretum, a landmark rightly called one of the "crown jewels" of Wilmington. The many jewels in this crown represent the volunteers and the vast number of hours invested shaping this seven-acre botanical garden, a surprising oasis located smack in the heart of our county.

Al Hight, Arboretum director for the past five years, is grateful for the support of faithful volunteers. He works hand in hand with them and will offer congratulations for their service during the anniversary ceremonies, which will include burying a time capsule on the Arboretum grounds. The time capsule's contents, to be opened at the Arboretum's 50th anniversary, will be determined by New Hanover County school children, who will tell the story of what makes Wilmington thrive in 2014.

Dozens of redbud and Japanese maple trees dressed in autumnal splendor will provide the backdrop for this celebration, plus a rose garden fragrant with fall blooms, a cottage-style herb garden, a magical children's garden and playhouse, a Japanese garden with teahouse and winding stone stream, an experimental vegetable garden, and one of the state's largest water gardens complete with large, colorful koi and a humorously sculptured sea serpent. New additions include the expanded picnic and parking areas, enlarged turf of wedding lawn, and a lush tropical garden with hardy palms, such as pindo, needle leaf and sabal palmetto. The Arboretum gardens, greenhouses and grounds — even the gift shop — will be in top-notch form thanks to the thousands of hours generously given by volunteers.

"I want the Arboretum to go in the direction of its original mission as part of Cooperative Extension [via North Carolina State University], a 'working arboretum' that tests plant specimens from around the world," Hight says. "Nursery people can then plug the successful plants into their production systems — and into our gardens. We're not there yet, but with the continued help of our volunteers, we will be."

The precedent for volunteers' devotion to an extension agent began in the early '80s when Dr. Charles E. "Pete" Lewis asked a group of garden club women to help him flesh out ideas for an arboretum. Nina Lane and Oleta Friedman burned the midnight oil with Lewis in the planning stages, worked at the Lewis Conservatory once it was established, and answered the phones for the first plant hotline to the tune of 20,000 plus hours. Lane was more hands-on in the greenhouse, so when a group of school children came to the arboretum for a field trip, she asked Friedman to take them on a tour.

"All of the children were given a potted plant to take home," Friedman says. "I asked one excited little boy, 'Are you going to give it to your mama, or are you going to plant it yourself?' The boy assured me with great enthusiasm that he was going to plant it himself. It touched my heart and I said, 'That plant is going to grow up big!' The little boy beamed, and that was all I needed to love being a volunteer."

Friedman will be 93 years old this year and is looking forward to attending the Arboretum celebration for which she will provide the decorative ribbons.

One current and equally devoted volunteer, board member and master gardener Sue Watkins, is the chairperson for Art in the Arboretum, the Cape Fear coast's premier fall art show and the Arboretum's major fundraiser. This year, the show will be extended to a three-day run, October 3–5, which coincides with the Arboretum's anniversary. The gardens will be alive with continuous artist demonstrations (2D and 3D, plein air and pine needle weaving), children's activities (scavenger hunt and nature-themed projects), and entertainment by local musicians. The grounds' natural fall beauty will provide a perfect setting for creativity, including nature-inspired jewelry and metalsmith creations, plus ceramics, glass, textiles, stone, woodwork, painting and photography. Refreshments may be purchased from the 4-H club, and a special art exhibit and sale sponsored by the Ability Garden will feature artists with disabilities. Watkins is proud that New Hanover County has the only arboretum with a horticulture therapy program.

As a master gardener for the past ten years, Watkins enjoys sharing her horticultural knowledge with visitors at the spring plant sale and all public events. She says that Hight continues to make vast improvements all around, and that New Hanover is among the top two counties with the largest number of arboretum volunteers.

"If we're going to support the nursery industry, we have to be willing to experiment with many different plants that might thrive and benefit in our climate," says Hight, a 25-year extension veteran. "It is our job as an educational resource to help people figure out plant problems, and that is what we stress to our volunteers in our master gardener program. It is a great service because we're not trying to sell anything. We just want to give the public the information they need to grow healthy plants and to interface with garden centers in an informed manner."

The New Hanover County Master Gardener Volunteer Association has more than three hundred active members who volunteer in many different ways:

maintaining the demonstration gardens, presenting gardening education to interested groups through the Speakers' Bureau, building and repairing structures that require carpentry skills and answering gardening questions culled from the plant clinic's resources through North Carolina State.

Informed volunteers who work the clinic give accurate, research-based information on how to select the right plants for a particular garden site; identify weeds, insects and plant diseases; and avoid overuse of chemical fertilizers. In 2013, the plant clinic served more than 6,000 people.

Ken Campbell, a retired Army and New York police officer, attended the very first master gardeners' class in the mid-80s, and still heads up a group of six volunteers, all 70-years plus, who call themselves, simply, "the carpenters."

"Al Hight is one of the best bosses I've ever had," Campbell says. "We have a first-class wood shop, and we build gazebos, repair out-buildings, and create rustic bird houses, plant stands, and tool holders from recycled wood and slate materials. We sell our garden art at the annual plant sale in April or any other Arboretum function we can get our toe in the door."

Sometimes, instead of a "toe in the door," it is a "hand on the tiller."

"George Ford was working on a project in the Tribute Garden," says Victor Hall, the only volunteer married to a native Wilmingtonian (Meredith Little Hall). "I asked him how I could become involved, and, without batting an eye, he handed over his tiller. My volunteer days at the Arboretum were underway! My wife, Meredith, and I love the Arboretum. She works in the on-site gift shop and we both really enjoy participating with the other volunteers."

A graduate of the 2005 master gardener class, Pat Brandt is now chairperson for the Arboretum gift shop.

"We have wind chimes, children's books, garden tools and rubber duckies dressed to reflect the season," she laughs. "I also encourage people to join Friends of the Arboretum. Membership benefits include two tickets to visit Airlie Gardens, free admission to all state arboretums, and a ten-percent discount at the gift shop and many other stores in the area."

Alice Canup, a new master gardener grad, is vice president of the Arboretum board, mainly responsible for fund raising. Together with master gardener president Brenda Husemann and husband Dick Husemann, she also works the plant clinic, including the remote clinics at Carolina Beach and Wilmington's downtown farmers' market.

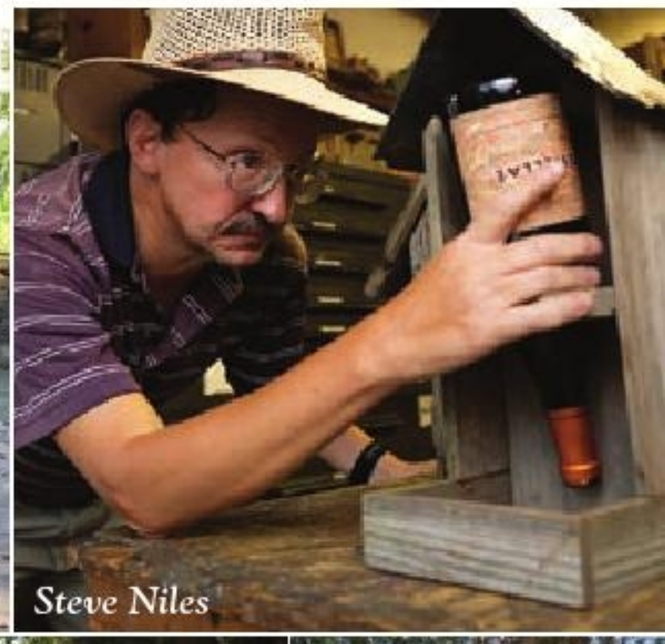
Another recent master gardener grad, David Brenner said his fellow classmates are some of the "finest, funniest, and most caring citizens I ever met." Master gardeners have to volunteer a certain number of hours in the plant clinic to become certified. "My mentor said this is where 'the rubber meets the road', but sometimes we feel like we're in the middle of a comedy. One caller asked how to remove a snake from her closet. I asked her how she knew the snake was still in the closet, and she replied, 'because I taped it in there.' When I repeated her answer aloud, my nearby colleague snorted a large belly laugh. We could just see her sticking duct tape all over the snake, but she said, 'I didn't tape the snake. I taped the crack around the closet door.' I gave her the names of several local pest removal services. I don't know how this worked out, but hope she and the snake lived happily ever after."

Funny or serious, old or new, it would take a very thick book to mention all the volunteers who have made a meaningful contribution to the Arboretum. But dedicated volunteers guided by a brilliant staff have put the New Hanover County Arboretum on the map. And like the roses, a jewel by any other name is still a jewel.

The New Hanover County Arboretum's 25th Anniversary celebration will take place on Saturday, October 4, at 4 p.m., during Art in the Arboretum, which runs Friday, October 3, through Sunday, October 5, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (910) 798-7660 or visit www.arboretum.nhcgov.com or www.gardeningnhc.org.

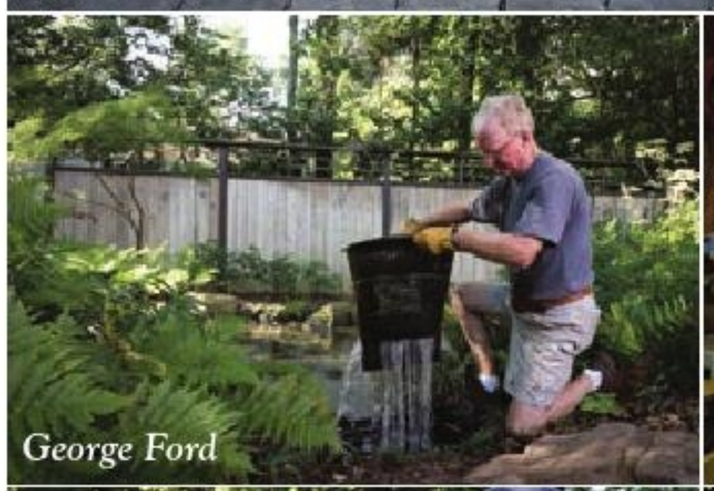
Linda Carol Grattafiori is a Wilmington writer whose work has appeared in numerous local and regional publications. When she isn't writing or teaching part-time at Cape Fear Community College, you can find her in her own garden. Contact her at lindacg@bellsouth.net

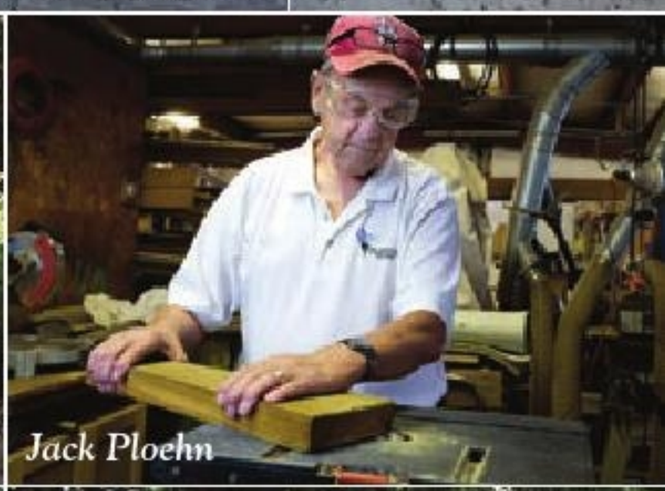
Al Hight and Victor Hall


Steve Niles

Mark Weekley, Victor Hall, Rob Erdmann and John Ranalli

Ken Carter

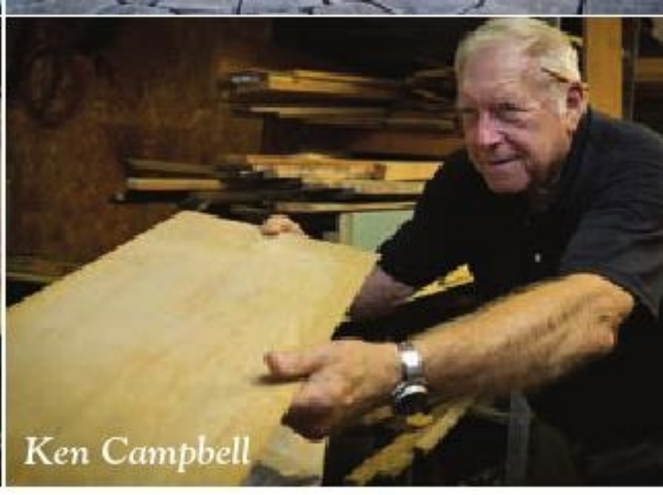

George Ford


Jack Ploehn

Sandy Hill

Russell Rucks

Sue Shepard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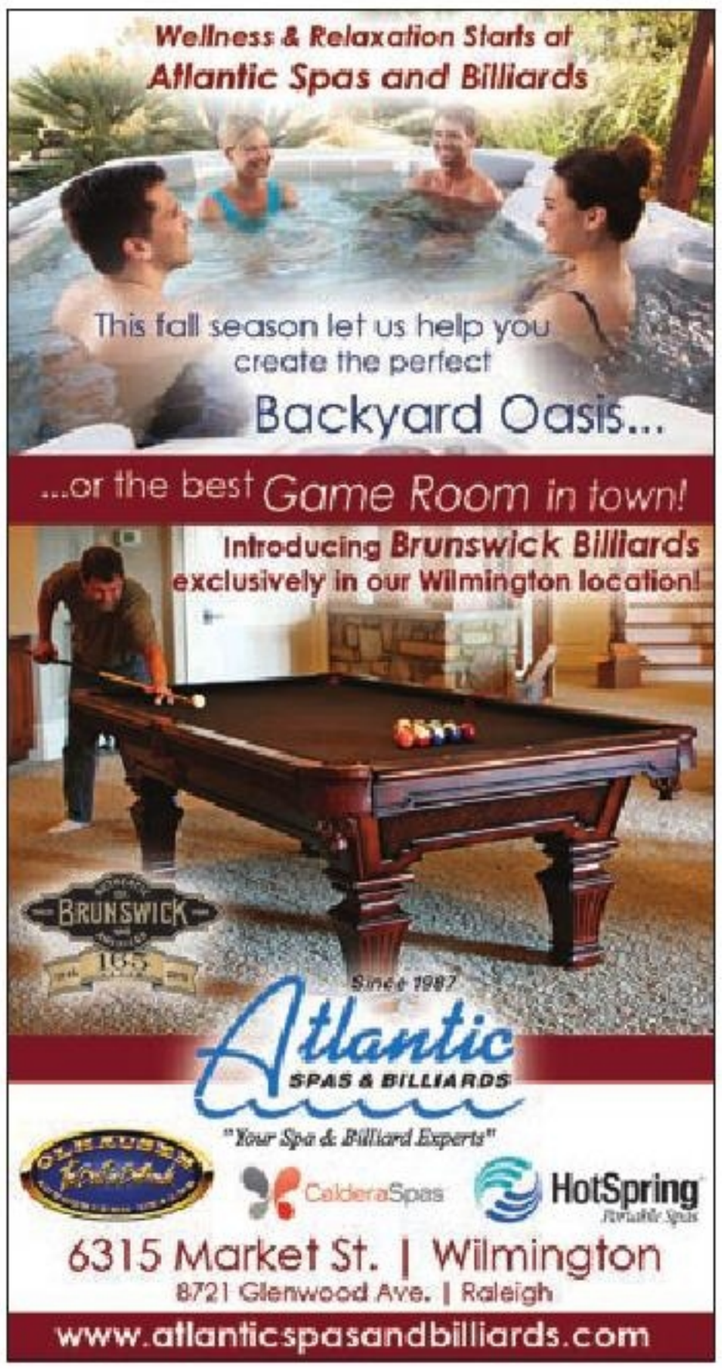

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ALMANAC

October

By Noah Salt

Bittersweet October is finally here, autumn's version of April. Harvest season is winding up and hardwood trees have reached their glorious finale — fiery maples, crimson elms, brilliant yellow beech leaves drifting to the darkening Earth. Horse apples are also turning to cider in the long dry grass beneath the orchard trees and the mornings are sometimes misty, sometimes bell clear. Summer's leftovers are being cleared away. The ferns along the back fence are turning to rust. Funeral pyres of leaves pile up in the neighborhood — someone is burning their own around the block — and a noticeably colder rain comes down. The first fires of the season will soon be lit indoors, with guardian jack-o'-lanterns and mums anchoring porches, awaiting young goblins in search of treats. Indian corn will be tacked to doors, a symbol of the harvest feast to come. The garden out back is looking more than a little forlorn, leggy and home to only a few late-season melons, mashed figs and early winter greens. Goldfinches and myrtle warblers are returning to the feeders; robins returning to get high on the rich red berries of the Savannah hollies and blazing old-fashioned nandina.

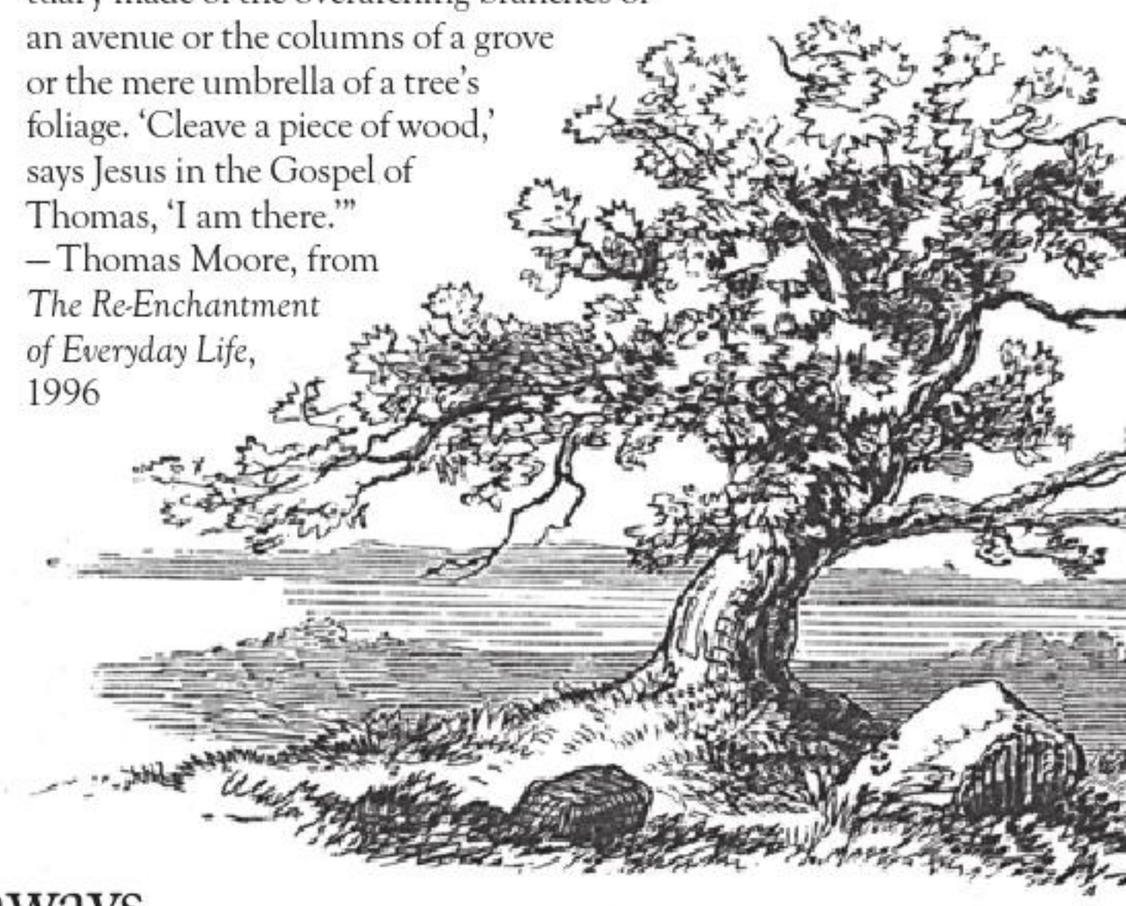
"Cultivators of the earth are the most Valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bonds."

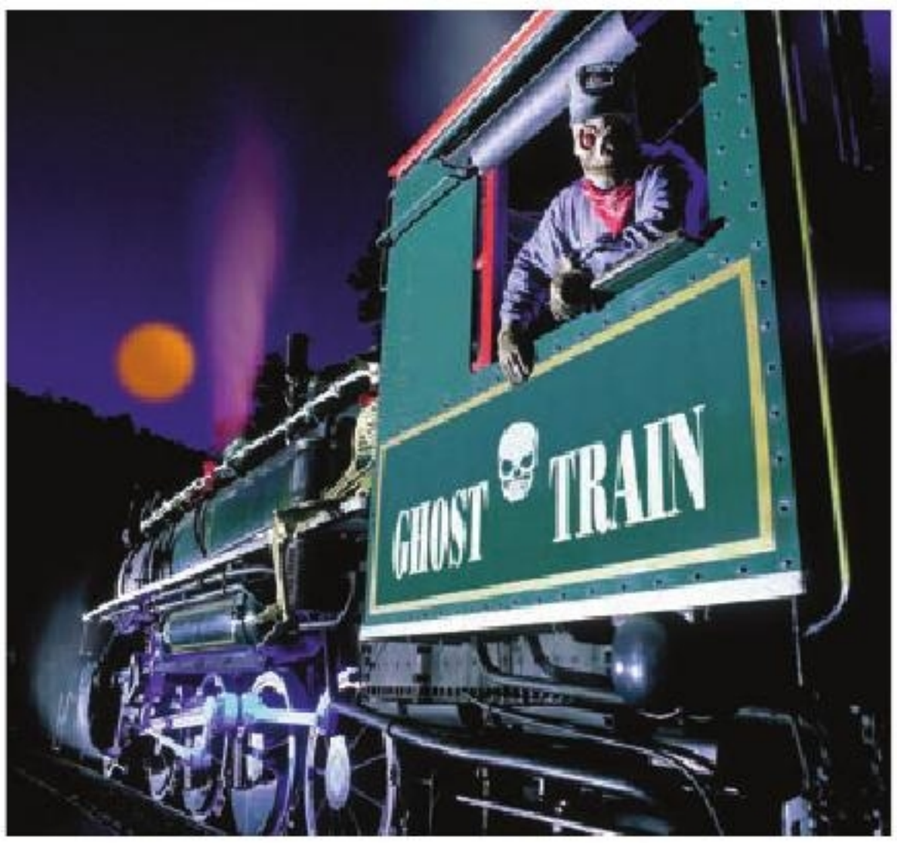
— Thomas Jefferson (1785)
in a letter to John Jay

A Writer in the Garden

"Trees are the teachers, revealers, containers, companions, and protectors of the sacred, and our relationship to them, whether we meet them gently in a forest or, muscled and equipped, cut them down for the price of lumber, touches on our deepest values, emotions, and sense of meaning. Divinity resides somehow in the marrow of a tree and in the sanctuary made of the overarching branches of an avenue or the columns of a grove or the mere umbrella of a tree's foliage. 'Cleave a piece of wood,' says Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas, 'I am there.'"

— Thomas Moore, from *The Re-Enchantment of Everyday Life*, 1996





October Highways

October may be the ideal time for a weekend family road trip. Fortunately, great events and destinations abound. Here's a trio of our favorites from shore to mountaintop. Plenty more can be found at www.visitnc.com.

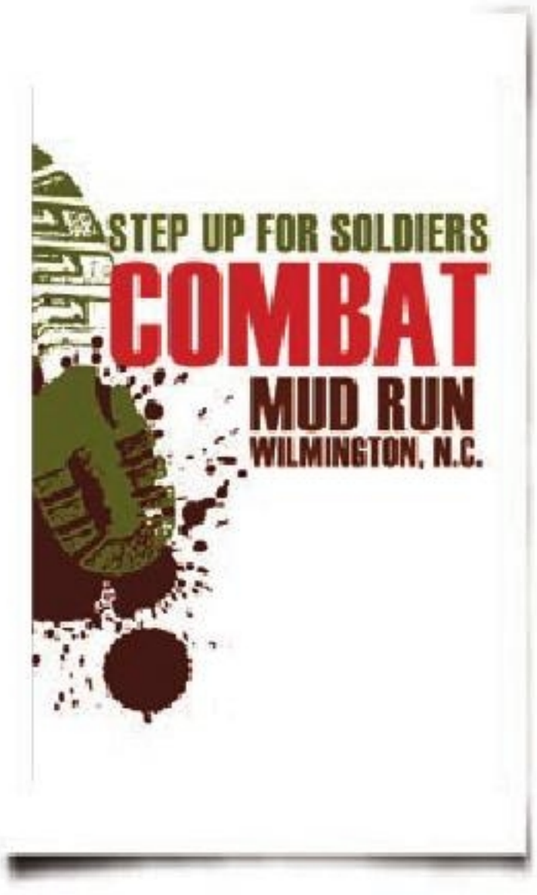
The 36th Annual Riverfest, October 3–5, Wilmington. The beloved celebration of Cape Fear life and culture featuring great food and scores of craft beers, live entertainment on two stages.

The Storytelling Festival of the Carolinas, October 18–19, Laurinburg. The annual extravaganza of the spoken word featuring dozens of the finest yarn-spinners, story-weavers and flat-out delightful liars found anywhere.

Ghost Train Halloween Festival, every weekend in October, Blowing Rock. Spend your day leaf-peeping the Blue Ridge Parkway at its peak and wind up at a safe and spooktacular family-friendly attraction ranked as one of the Top 20 events by the Southeast Tourism Society. Attractions include rides on the ghost train, the creepy carnival and trick or treating. Reserve early, guests limited each evening. (800) 526-5740.

October 2014

Arts Calendar



Combat Mud Run

10/18

Beer & Wine Festival

10/18

Paul Taylor Dance

10/25

Cinematique Film

Monday — Wednesday

10/1 Fall Book Sale

9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Heavily discounted hardbacks and paperbacks in all genres. Proceeds benefit Friends of New Hanover County Public Library. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6319 or www.nhclibrary.org.

10/2 Pink Ribbon Luncheon

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Luncheon with *New York Times* best-selling author Dorothea Benton Frank as guest speaker. Admission: $75. Proceeds benefit the Pink Ribbon Project. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 815-5002 or www.nhrmc.org/pinkribbon.

10/2 Child Yoga

3:30 p.m. A fun, interactive way for children of all ages to get moving. Learn animal poses, relaxation techniques and improve flexibility and coordination. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

10/2 Board Game Night

6–11 p.m. Join the Wilmington Board Game Group for a free night of board gaming. Cape Fear Games, 3608 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6006 or www.capefeargames.com.

10/2 Canines & Couture

6–8 p.m. Couture pup fashion show featuring twenty-five rescue pups strutting down the runway in their finest ensembles. The event raises awareness for the puppy mill bill. Admission: $10. Lumina Station, 1900 Eastwood Road, Wilmington. Info: scarlettsrescue.com.

10/2 Jazz at the CAM

6:30–8:30 p.m. Live music by Winston-Salem-based Reggie Buie Group. Admission: $5–12. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

10/2–4 King Mackerel Tournament

4–7 p.m. (Thursday); 7–5 p.m. (Friday); 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (Saturday). Premier fall fishing tournament featuring more than $100,000 in prizes, live entertainment by A Music Man, DJ Rodney and Chris Wright, a fish fry and more. Admission: $100–330. Southport Marina, Yacht Basin Drive, Southport. Info: (910) 457-6964 or www.usopenkmt.com.

10/2–5 Children's Theatre

7 p.m. Superstar Academy presents *#Alice*, a contemporary take on *Alice in Wonderland*. Admission: $12. Proceeds benefit the Superstar Academy. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 262-2245 or www.superstaracademy.org.

10/2–31 Emerging Artists Show

6:30 p.m. Art show and sale featuring artists over the age of eighteen with no more than five years experience creating in their discipline. Opening reception and awards on October 2 include raffle and cash bar. Art lectures include Pine Needle Art with Melanie Walter (October 9); Earthenware Sculpture with Justine Ferren (October 16); Fine Art Photography with Gordon Webb (October 23); African Quilting with Hattie Schmidt (October 30). Admission: Free. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-7956 or www.bellamymansion.org.

10/3 Fall Garden Party

11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Official opening of Wilmington Riverfest. Live entertainment by L Shape Lot; drinks and lunch by Parker's BBQ. Admission: $55. Proceeds benefit the economic and community development endowment fund of the Rotary Clubs of Wilmington Wheel and Garden Collaborative. Rotary Garden at Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 297-7403 or www.greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

10/3 & 4 Horror Dinner Theatre

7 p.m. Wilmington's *Horror Story*, a dinner theater production including three "scarefests" written by Anghus Houvouras, Calie Voorhis and Zach Hanner. Admission: $18–34. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

10/3–5 Art in the Arboretum

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Handcrafted jewelry, glass, textiles, painting, photography, metal and wood work as well as live music, artist demonstrations, children's art activities and a special art show — all in the gardens. Admission: $5. Proceeds support the Arboretum's wide range of educational and public service programs. New Hanover County Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 352-8760 or nhcarboretum.com.

10/3–5 NC Foosball Championship

6–10 p.m. (Friday); 11 a.m. – midnight (Saturday); 11 a.m. – until (Sunday). Annual championship open to all players featuring $2,500 in cash prizes. Admission: $5–25. Proceeds benefit the Brigade Boys & Girls Club. Breaktime Billiards Sports bar & Grill, 127 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (336) 325-3183 or www.breaktimetenpin.com.

10/3–5 Riverfest

Annual street fair in historic downtown Wilmington featuring over two hundred craft and food vendors, live entertainment on two stages, car show, SUP race, rowing regatta, children's activities, fireworks and the Invasion of the Pirates including a scavenger hunt, pirate's ball and evening flotilla. Admission: Free. Riverfront Park, Water Street & Princess Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 452-6862 or wilmingtonriverfest.com.

10/3–5 ACS Fall Home Show

11 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Saturday); 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Sunday). Annual fall home show presented by American Consumer Shows featuring hundreds of exhibits designed for homeowners in all stages of remodeling, landscaping and decorating. Admission: Free. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (888) 560-3976 or www.acshomeshow.com.

10/4 Run for the TaTa's

8 a.m. 5k chaser race around Mayfaire Town Center where the girls get a head start and music and entertainment await runners round every bend. Admission: $35–45. Proceeds benefit The Pink Ribbon Project, Love is Bald and The Pretty in Pink. Trysports at Mayfaire Shopping Center, 925 Town Center Drive, Wilmington. Info: its-go-time.com/runforthetatas2014.

10/4 Charity Golf Tournament

8 a.m. Charity golf tournament featuring a captain's choice format with shotgun start, lunch, awards, hole-in-one car, golf contests and door prizes. Admission: $100. Proceeds benefit the Carousel Center. Masonboro Country Club, 535 The Cape Boulevard, Wilmington. Info: (910) 367-2162 or www.carouselcenter.org.

10/4 Family Fun Day

9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Family-friendly day in the park includes mountain biking, kayaking in Town Creek, trail hiking with views of longleaf pine restoration efforts and a chance to learn about land protection and conservation. Admission: Free. Brunswick Nature Park, 2601 River Road, Winnabow. Info: (910) 790-4524 or www.coastallandtrust.org.

10/4 Day of Hope Beach Walk

9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Two-mile peaceful walk along Carolina Beach followed by raffles and live entertainment by Train Wreck. Admission: $25–30. Proceeds benefit local people battling cancer. Boardwalk Gazebo, 10 Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: www.dayofhopepi.org.

10/4 Photography Workshop

9:15–10:30 a.m. Award-winning photographer Chuck Carmack shares his best nature photography tips, tricks and techniques. Admission: Free. Temptations Everyday Gourmet, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

10/4 SE 360 Music Festival

10 a.m. – 10 p.m. Music Festival featuring hip-hop, R&B and rock music based in the South Eastern region of North Carolina. Admission: $10. Hampton Inn Wilmington–Medical Park, 2320 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (919) 270-5164 or www.se360fest.com.

10/4 Bark in the Park

11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Mighty mutts and playful purebreds are all welcome at the Skyhoundz Hyperflite Canine Disc Championships. No experience necessary. Admission: Free. Wrightsville Beach Park, 321 Causway Drive, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-7925 or www.towb.org.

10/4 Rooftop Concert

7–10 p.m. Live music by Jeremy Norris and the Buckshot Band.. Admission: $5. The Reel Café, 100 South Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-1832 or reelcafe.net.

10/4 & 5 Family Farm Day

10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Farm tours, animal exhibits, corn maze, hay rides, haunted woods trail, costumed actors, pumpkin patch, refreshments and more. Also runs October 11, 18 & 25. Admission: $8. Legacy Farms, 7494 Highway 41 West, Wallace. Info: (910) 805-3276 or www.legacyfarmsevents.com.

10/5 Mark Roberts in Concert

4–7 p.m. Motown and classic rock on the waterfront patio. Admission: Free. Bluewater Waterfront Grill, 4 Marina Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-8500 or www.bluewaterdining.com.

10/6 Salvation Army Tournament

7 a.m. Amateurs only charity golf tournament with four-person team captain's choice format with a men's and women's division. Includes award reception lunch, raffle and silent auction. Admission: $150. Proceeds benefit the Salvation Army. Cape Fear Country Club, 1518 Country Club Road, Wilmington. Info: www.salvationarmycarolinas.org.

10/7 Book Talk

6:30 p.m. Frank Amoroso talks about his novel, *Behind Every Great Fortune*, which follows international financier Otto Kahn as he amasses his fortune during the turbulent second decade of the twentieth century against the backdrop of a terrorist attack on New York City, the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the murder of Rasputin, and the Russian Revolution. Admission: Free. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6370 or www.nhclibrary.org.

10/7 & 8 Foreign Trade Conference

3 p.m. (Tuesday); 8:30 a.m. (Wednesday). Annual NC Foreign Trade Promotion Conference which brings together state, federal and private sector organizations to grow NC businesses globally. Includes reception, keynote speakers, luncheon, panel discussions, and tours of the North Carolina state ports, Wilmington International Airport and historic Wilmington. Admission: $150. Union Station, Cape Fear Community College, 502 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 452-5861 or www.ncftpc.com.

10/8 Airlie Bird Walk

8–9:30 a.m. Join Jill Peleuses and Airlie Gardens' Matt Collogan for a relaxed bird walk around Airlie Gardens. Admission: $9; free passes available at Wild Bird & Garden. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

10/8 Black River Nature Cruise

10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Four-hour getaway along the Black River narrated by coastal ecologist and author Andy Woods. Refreshments provided. Admission: $40–55. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Battleship NC dock, 101 South Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1611 or www.cfrboats.com.

10/8 Sugar 101

2 p.m. Discover the latest research regarding what sugar and artificial sweeteners do to the body, learn hidden sources of sugar and discover how to curb your sweet tooth with healthy alternative. Class includes green smoothie demo. Presented by Ryanna Battiste. Admission: Free. Brightmore Independent Living, 2324 South 41st Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 350-1980 or www.brightmoreofwilmington.com.

10/9 Coastal Energy Summit

7:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Annual event to inform local business and community leaders about energy-related issues. Includes keynote breakfast and lunch, guest speakers, displays and panel discussions. Admission: $80/person; $800/table of ten. Wilmington Convention Center, 10 Convention Center Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-8600 or www.wilmingtonbiz.com.

10/9 Picnic with Purpose

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Lunch at Blockade Runner with special guest and former Major League Baseball player Trot Nixon, guest speakers and raffle prizes. Proceeds benefit Wilmington Health Access for Teens. Blockade Runner Beach Resort, 275 Waynick Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 790-9949 or www.whatswhat.org.

10/10 Raise the Ruff!

7 p.m. Fundraiser/celebration hosted by Paws Place featuring heavy hors d'oeuvres from local vendors, live music, live and silent auctions, raffles and a cash bar. Admission: $40. Proceeds go towards building an indoor sanctuary for Paws Place Dog Rescue. Terraces at Sir Tyler, 1826 Sir Tyler Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 845-7297 or www.pawsplace.org.

10/10 & 11 Coastal Co-Op Show

5–8:30 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Saturday). Inaugural Coastal Co-Op Show features a host of regional boutiques and shops under one roof. Sip & Shop Launch Party on Friday night features live entertainment by local musicians, wine and a chance to preview the shops. Coastline Convention Center, 503 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 319-7102 or www.facebook.com/coastalcoopshow.

10/11 British Car Show

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Annual car show hosted by the British Motor Club featuring all marques, makes and years with an emphasis on the preservation of classic British sports cars. Event includes food vendors, raffles, awards and dash plaques for the first one hundred entrees. Pre-show on October 10, 6–8 p.m. Admission: $25–30. Proceeds support local charities. The Pub at Sweet & Savory, 321 Causeway Drive, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 523-5624 or www.bmccf.org/car-show.

10/11 Port City Rumble

10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Annual car and bike show hosted by the Maulers Car & Bike Club featuring pre '67 cars and trucks, traditional hot rods, old school bikes, choppers, bobbers and customs as well as creeper races, awards and live music. After-party at The Calico Room at 7 p.m. Princess Street, Wilmington. Info: www.official-portcityrumble.com.

10/11 Fire in the Pines Festival

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Celebration of the importance of fire in the longleaf pine ecosystem with a controlled burn demo, live bluegrass music, food vendors, animal exhibits, fire trucks, interactive educational activities, hayrides, games, crafts, raffles and a scavenger hunt. Admission: $1. Halyburton Park, 4099 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-0075 or www.fireinthepines.org.

10/11 Macbeth for Kids

11 a.m. & 2 p.m. Bare Bones Performances of Wilmington translates Shakespeare poetry into modern English in this kid-friendly version of the classic tragedy *Macbeth*. Admission Free. Myrtle Grove Library, 5155 South College Road, Wilmington & Carolina Beach Library, 300 Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: www.facebook.com/bare-bones-performances.

10/11 Back Door Kitchen Tour

11 a.m. – 5 p.m. A self-guided tour of nine distinguished kitchens in historic downtown Wilmington. Complimentary trolley service provided between homes; boxed lunch available for purchase at nearby Hannah Block Community Arts Center. Admission: $15–25. Info: (910) 632-0008 or www.rowilmington.org.

10/11 Modern Rockfest

1–11 p.m. Music festival featuring Capitol Cities, Pepper, New Politics, Bear Hands, SomeKindaWonderful, IamDynamite, My Goodness, D&D Sluggers, beer and food vendors. Admission: $35–70. Proceeds support Step Up For Soldiers. 111 Cowan Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 791-3088 or www.modernrock987.com.

10/11 Hidden Battleship

1:30–5:30 p.m. A four-hour behind-the-scenes tour of un-restored areas of the battleship. The Azalea Coast Radio Club will be in Radio II to explain their work on the ship's radio transmitters. Admission: $45–50. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

10/11 Improv Theatre

2 p.m. Rags to Riches Theatre of Raleigh performs the classic story of *Puss in Boots*, using music, laughter, improvisation, and audience participation. Admission: Free. Main Library, 201 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6300 or www.nhcgov.com/library.

10/11 Taste of Wrightsville Beach

5–8 p.m. Celebrate Wrightsville Beach's diverse and delicious fare with more than twenty-five food, wine and beer tasting booths, plus live music. Admission: $25–250. Proceeds benefit the Wrightsville Beach Beautification Project and

Weekend Meals on Wheels. MarineMax, 130 Short Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: wrightsvillebeachfoundation.org.

10/11 JJ Grey & Mofro in Concert

6:30 p.m. 98.3 The Penguin presents swamp rock and soul favorites JJ Grey & Mofro in a return engagement. Admission: $25–30. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 332-0983 or www.greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

10/11 The Swingle Singers

7:30 p.m. International a cappella phenomenon delivering folk ballads, funk jams and fugues. Admission: $22–50. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

10/11 & 12 Seafood, Blues & Jazz

11 a.m. Live jazz and blues performances on two stages, food and craft vendors, wine garden, kids zone and special Grammy award-winning headliners Delbert McClinton and the Robert Cray Band. Admission: $25–60. Fort Fisher Air Force Recreation Area, 118 Riverfront Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

10/12 CROP Hunger Walk

1:30 p.m. Community-wide walk sponsored by Church World Service to raise awareness and funds to end hunger at home and around the world. Proceeds benefit Nourish NC. Hugh MacRae Park, Shelter #5, 1799 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 392-0521 or hunger.cwsglobal.org.

10/12 Walk for Wishes

2 p.m. 5k to raise funds to grant the wishes of local children with life-threatening medical conditions. John Nesbitt Loop, 1 Bob Sawyer Drive, Wrightsville Beach. Info: eastnc.wish.org.

10/12 Aria Night

4 p.m. Opera Wilmington production featuring local talent performing favored arias, duets and small ensembles composed by Mozart, Verdi, Tosca and Lakme. Admission: $10–30. Beckwith Hall, UNCW Cultural Arts Building, 5270 Randall Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.opera-wilmington.org.

10/12 Central Park in Concert

4–7 p.m. Classic rock and modern tunes on the waterfront patio. Admission: Free. Bluewater Waterfront Grill, 4 Marina Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-8500 or www.bluewaterdining.com.

10/13 Great Gatsby Tea

2 p.m. Revel in the essence of 1920's high society in the formal parlors of a stately antebellum mansion with fine food, tea and prizes. Admission: $35. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

10/13 Fall Painting Party

2 p.m. Join fine artist and graphic designer Kinga Baransky for step-by-step instructions on painting a fall scene in under two hours. Supplies provided. Admission: Free. Brightmore Independent Living, 2324 South 41st Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 350-1980 or www.brightmoreofwilmington.com.

10/15–19 ARTBlast

10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Five-day celebration of the arts showcasing theater, film, dance, literature, music and art throughout downtown Wilmington. Admission: Free. Info: www.artblastwilmington.com.

10/16 Junior Naturalist Program

1:30–3 p.m. Nature Journaling for ages 6–11. Admission: $10. Halyburton Park, 4099 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-0075 or www.halyburtonpark.com.

10/16 Yue-Kiln Ceramic Music

7:30 p.m. The Celadon Ou Music Troupe of Cixi City, China revitalize the Chinese folk music tradition of playing musical instruments made of clay combined with lively dance and performance. Admission: $18–50. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

10/16–26 Carrie the Musical

8 p.m. Live production based on the famous supernatural horror novel by Stephen King, *Carrie*. Directed by Nicholas Gray; musical direction by Bryan Putnam; choreography by Kendra Goehring-Garrett. See website for schedule. City Stage, 21 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 264-2602 or citystagenc.com.

10/17 Movie in the Park

6 p.m. Monsters University. Bring picnic blankets and lawn chairs. Admission: Free. Wrightsville Beach Park, 321 Causeway Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 679-4645 or www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com.

10/17 Rare Beer Tasting

6–9 p.m. Thirty popular breweries pour their favorite limited release beers for an evening of appetizers and delightfully voracious brews. Admission: $75–85. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-8622 or www.lighthousebeerandwine.com.

10/17 Airlie Oyster Roast

6–10:30 p.m. Appetizers, steamed oysters, BBQ, fish fry, dessert, cash bar and live entertainment. Admission: $80. Proceeds benefit environmental education programs. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

10/17–18 Bluefish Bonanza

9 a.m. (Friday); 7:30 a.m. (Saturday). Family-friendly surfcasting tournament. Admission: $45–185. Harborside Pavilion, Keelson Road, Bald Head Island. Info: www.baldheadisland.org/bluefish-bonanza.

10/17–19 Halloween Festival

6–11 p.m. (Friday); 12–11 p.m. (Saturday); 12–9 p.m. (Sunday). Includes haunted manor house and wagon ride, fortune-teller readings, petting zoo, inflatable fun, food and more. Admission: $10–15. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org.

10/17–26 Steel Magnolias

7:30 p.m. (Friday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). An alternately hilarious and touching drama set in a gossipy Southern beauty parlor. Presented by Brunswick Little Theatre; directed by Thom Clemmons. See website for schedule. Admission: $12–17. AMUZU Theatre, 111 North Howe Street, Southport. Info: (910) 547-9123 or www.brunswicklittletheatre.com.

10/17–19 Surf Fishing Challenge

Land-based fishing tournament featuring a 36-hour fishing marathon, over $12,000 in cash and prizes and an awards dinner. Admission: $60–95. Proceeds benefit the Cape Fear Community College Marine Technology Club. 224 Canal Drive, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 452-6378 or www.fishermanspost.com/tournaments.

10/18 Combat Mud Run

7:30 a.m. Military-style mud run featuring a girls-only run and an optional meathead mile extension. Admission: $40–75. Proceeds benefit Step Up for Soldiers. National Guard Armory, 2412 Infantry Road, Wilmington. Info: its-go-time.com/combatmudrunfall2014.

10/18 Cape Fear Heart Walk

9 a.m. Three-mile route; rollerblades, bicycles, strollers and dogs welcome. Proceeds benefit the American Heart Association. UNCW Athletic Field, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-9270 or www.capefearncheartwalk.org.

10/18 Macbeth for Kids

10 a.m. & 2 p.m. Bare Bones Performances of Wilmington translates Shakespeare poetry into modern English in this kid-friendly version of the classic tragedy, *Macbeth*. Admission Free. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington & Main Library, 201 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: www.facebook.com/bare-bones-performances.

10/18 Oakdale Cemetery Tour

10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Travel back to the time of the Yellow Fever with a guided trek through the oldest rural cemetery in North Carolina. Lead by local historian David Rice and cemetery superintendent Eric Kozen. Admission: $10. Oakdale Cemetery, 520 North Fifteenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-5682 or www.oakdalecemetery.org.

10/18 Salty Paws Festival

12–4 p.m. Day of fun for families and four-legged friends includes live entertainment, arts and crafts, food, music, pet contests, children's activities, raffles, prizes and opportunities to adopt rescue animals. Admission: $6. Carolina Beach Lake Park, Atlanta Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-7233 or www.savinganimalsduringdisasters.org.

10/18 Beer & Wine Festival

1–5 p.m. The Lighthouse Beer & Wine Festival features over 150 craft breweries and wineries with over 300 samplings, live music by the Rosco Bandana Band, food trucks, vendors and more. Admission: $30–50. A portion of proceeds benefit the Carousel Center. Battleship Park, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-8622 or www.lighthousebeerandwine.com.

10/18 Zombie Run

6 p.m. Festive 5k run/walk through the scenic nature preserve trails. Runners will be given three health flags (optional), which the "zombies" will be clambering to steal. Admission: $25–30. Poplar Grove Plantation, 102000 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org.

10/18 Yacht Venture

6 p.m. Enjoy dinner and cocktails, a silent auction and raffle, and explore a fleet of luxury yachts in a stunning waterfront setting. Admission: $100. Proceeds benefit the Children's Museum of Wilmington. MarineMax, 130 Short Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.yachtventure.org.

10/18 The Imitations in Concert

6 p.m. Variety show features dance and party band The Imitations. Admission: Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

10/18 & 19 Autumn with Topsail

7:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Saturday); 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Sunday). Arts and crafts booths, beer & wine garden, boat rides, children's activities, food court and live entertainment by the Key West Band, North Tower Band, The Embers and Craig Woolard. Admission: $5–8. Anderson Boulevard and Flake Avenue, Topsail Beach. Info: (910) 599-6214 or autumnwithtopsail.com.

10/18 & 19 NC Oyster Festival

9 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Saturday); 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Sunday). Local seafood, live music, arts and crafts vendors, road race, kid's area, oyster stew cook-off, oyster shucking and eating contests, and shag competition. Admission: $5. 8 East Second Street, Ocean Isle Beach. Info: (910) 754-6644 or www.brunswickcountychamber.org.

10/18 & 19 The Capitol Steps

2 p.m. & 7 p.m. (Saturday); 2 p.m. (Sunday). A musical political satire originally performed by a group of Senate staffers who set out to make fun of the very people who employed them. Admission: $22–50. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

10/19 Golf Tourn. & Games Day

11:30 a.m. Join the Good Shepherd Center for a day of golf, plus silent auction, bridge, mahjong and more. Admission: $35–100. Proceeds benefit the hungry and homeless in Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender counties. Cape Fear National Golf Course, 1281 Cape Fear National Drive, Leland. Info: (910) 763-4424 or www.goodshepherdwilmington.org.

10/19 NC Symphony

7:30 p.m. At the Oscars featuring the Overture to *West Side Story*, The New Enterprise from *Star Trek*, the Shark Theme from *Jaws*, and Adventures on Earth from *E.T.* Conducted by William Henry Curry. Admission: $30–70. UNCW Kenan Auditorium, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.ncsymphony.org.

10/21 Harvest Luncheon

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Wilmington Area Rebuilding Ministry's annual harvest luncheon featuring special guest speaker and Castle Branch President Mr. Joe Finley and music by Mr. David Hervey. Admission: Free. First Baptist Church Activities Center, 1939 Independence Boulevard, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-7563 or www.warmnc.org.

10/21 Civil War Lecture

6 p.m. Historian Dr. Chris Fonvielle discusses "Crossroads of Freedom" by James McPherson as well as "America's War: Talking About the Civil War and Emancipation on their 150th Anniversaries, Part IV." Admission: Free. NHC Northeast Public Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6305 or www.news.nhcgov.com.

10/22–29 Encore Restaurant Week

Eight-day culinary celebration featuring over thirty restaurants throughout the Port City offering prix fixe menus at a special price. No passes or coupons necessary. Various locations

in Wilmington. Info: (910) 791-0688 or www.encorerestaurantweek.com.

10/23 & 24 Trick-or-Treat

5–8:30 p.m. Family-friendly Halloween event featuring indoor trick-or-treating, storytelling, magic show, spooky scuba divers, face painting, magic show and haunted gardens. NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8257 or www.ncaquariums.com.

10/24 4th Friday at TheArtWorks

6–9 p.m. Art exhibit featuring realist artist Maria Esther Williams' seascapes, landscapes and botanicals. View the work of more than twenty artists and enjoy free food and live entertainment. TheArtWorks, 200 Willard Street, Wilmington. Info: www.theartworks.co.

10/24 Gallery Walk

6–9 p.m. Self-guided tours of galleries, art spaces and studios in Downtown Wilmington. Admission: Free. Info: (910) 343-0998 or www.artscouncilofwilmington.org.

10/24 WILMA's Women to Watch

6–10 p.m. Moroccan-inspired bash and awards celebration recognizing the top "women to watch" in our community including exotic bites by Bon Appetit, cocktails and belly dancing. Admission: $40/person; $350/group of 10. Union Station Building, 502 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: www.wilmaontheweb.com.

10/24 Vintage Event

6:30 p.m. The Vintage Event, hosted by the Historic Wilmington Foundation features gourmet food from the area's finest restaurants and caterers, live music, and live and silent auctions. Admission: $50–175. Proceeds help protect and preserve the irreplaceable resources in the Lower Cape Fear region. Saint Thomas Preservation Hall, 208 Dock Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.

10/24–26 Women's Collegiate Golf

8 a.m. Annual Landfall tradition hosted by the UNCW women's golf team featuring eighteen teams from twelve states, representing nine conferences. Admission: Free. Country Club of Landfall, 1550 Landfall Drive, Wilmington. Info: landfall-tradition.com.

10/25 Beach 2 Battleship Triathlon

7:30 a.m. Internationally recognized competition that includes a 1.2-mile swim across the Banks Channel, 56-mile bike ride through northern Wilmington and a 13.1-mile run to the Battleship. Banks Channel, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.beach2battleship.com.

10/25 Fall Festival

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Halloween games, trick-or-treating and a late-night guided hike along the maritime forest trail, bringing you face to face with scary legends of the past. Admission: Free. Fort Fisher State Historic Site, 1610 Fort Fisher Boulevard South, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-5538 or www.nchistoricsites.org.

10/25 Halloween Race

3 p.m. The "How Far to the Bar" Halloween Race features a 5k, live music by Machine Gun, dog costume contest, booty bags and more. Admission: $20–30. Carolina Beach Municipal Boat Docks, SeaWitch Tiki Bar and Grill227, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 200-6959 or www.howfartothebar.com.

10/25 Charlie Daniels Band

5 p.m. Cape Fear native son Charlie Daniels and his band perform country and southern rock. Admission: $50–101. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3614 or www.greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

10/25 Halloween Octoberfest

6 p.m. Halloween celebration featuring a costume contest for pets and humans as well as live music by Chris Bellamy. Quarter Moon Books & Gifts, 708 South Anderson Boulevard, Topsail. Info: (910) 328-4969 or www.quartermoonbooks.com.

10/25 Chords for a Cause

6 p.m. Benefit concert featuring multi-instrumentalist Randall Bramblett and a silent auction. Admission: $20–30. Proceeds benefit the Sulloway Family. Bourgie Nights, 123 Princess Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 332-0983.

10/25 Haunted Library

6–9 p.m. Storytelling festival for kids features a haunted house, library labyrinth, mummy wrapping, trick-or-treat story walk, spooky photo booth, fossilized bone pit, face painting and more. Performances by The Dance Element, Zach Hanner, Joceyln Beam-Walson, Mr. Max, Samantha Hunt, Joe Sheppard and Mr. Scooter. Admission: Free. Main Library, 201 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6393 or www.nhclibrary.org.

10/25 Paul Taylor Dance

7:30 p.m. Branded as the world's most important living choreographer, Paul Taylor brings his contemporary dance troupe to the stage for a retrospective of their work in celebration of their 60th anniversary. Co-presented by Thalian Hall Center for the Performing Arts, Inc. and UNCW Presents. Admission: $18–32. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

10/25 Wilmington Symphony

8 p.m. Wilmington favorite Domonique Launey joins the Wilmington Symphony for the mighty Third Concerto of Rachmaninoff, Rach Three. Admission: $6–27. UNCW Kenan Auditorium, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 791-9262 or www.wilmingtonsymphony.org.

10/28 Battleship Halloween Bash

5:30–8 p.m. Trick-or-treat aboard the battleship and enjoy carnival activities, petting zoo, games, bounce houses, snacks, temporary tattoos, caricatures, and storytelling. Admission: $5. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

10/31 Halloween Movie Night

6:30 p.m. *Hocus Pocus* at 7 p.m. and *Psycho* at 9 p.m. Blankets, chairs and coolers are permitted; candy, popcorn, beer and wine available for purchase. Admission: $5. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

Monday – Wednesday Cinematique

7 p.m. Independent, classic and foreign films. Check online for updated listings and special screenings. 10/1: *Magic in the Moonlight*; 10/6–8: *Calvary*; 10/13–15: *The Trip to Italy*; 10/20–22: Land Ho! Admission: $7. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info/Tickets: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

Tuesday Story Time

10:30 a.m. & 3 p.m. Story time and music for preschoolers. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

Tuesday Kids Cooking Club

3:30 p.m. Children explore seasonal recipes and savor the flavor of their hard work. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

Tuesday Wine Tasting

6–8 p.m. Free wine tasting plus wine and small plate specials all night. Admission: Free. The Fortunate Glass, 29 South Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-4292 or www.fortunateglasswinebar.com.

Tuesday Cape Fear Blues Jam

8 p.m. A unique gathering of the area's finest Blues musicians. Bring your instrument and join the fun. No cover charge. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Avenue. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

Wednesday S.T.E.M. Explorations

10 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. Explore science, technology, engineering and mathematics by applying them in fun, hands-on activities. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

Wednesday T'ai Chi at CAM

12–1 p.m. Qigong (Practicing the Breath of Life) with Martha Gregory. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Members: $5. Non-members: $8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Wednesday Wine Pairing

5–6:30 p.m. Come in for a Sweet 'n Savory wine pairing and learn about a specific style of wine every week as well as which foods best bring out its flavor. All bottles of wine are $5 off. Sweet 'n Savory Cafe, 1611 Pavilion Place, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-0115 or www.sweetnsavorycafe.com.

Wednesday Guided Meditation

6:15–7:15 p.m. A growing community of people who desire connection within themselves and with others. $10–15. McKay Healing Arts, 4916 Wrightsville Avenue, Wilmington. Info: (949) 547-4402 or www.allovehealing.com.

Thursday Jump! Move! Learn!

3:30 p.m. Children learn how to keep their bodies healthy and happy through exercises and games. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

Thursday Yoga at the CAM

12–1 p.m. Join in a soothing retreat sure to charge you up while you relax in a beautiful, comfortable setting. Sessions are ongoing and are open to beginner and experienced participants. Members: $5. Non-members: $8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Thursday Story Cooks

10 a.m. Cooking club for preschoolers. Storytime followed by the creation of a dish inspired by the book. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

Thursday – Sunday Theatre Festival

8 p.m. (Thursday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Celebrate the spooky and macabre with a different production each weekend. The festival features an original play by Gwenyfar Rohler based on Death Bed: The Bed That Eats, original works by Stephen Raeburn based on Edgar Allen Poe's writing, and more. Admission: $15–20. Cape Fear Playhouse, 613 Castle Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 367-5237 or www.bigdawgproductions.org.

Friday Toddler Time

10 a.m. Help your little ones express their creativity and practice motor skills. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

Friday Art Adventure

3:30 p.m. Bring your child to express their creativity through various forms of art. Admission: $9. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

Friday & Saturday Haunted Farm

7–10:30 p.m. Late-night Halloween attraction featuring a professional haunted house with movie studio sets, a haunted woods trail, night corn maze, hayrides, pumpkin patch, costumed actors, refreshments and more. Also runs 10/30 & 31. Admission: $25. Legacy Farms, 7494 Highway 41 West, Wallace. Info: (910) 805-3276 or www.legacyfarmsevents.com.

Saturday Architectural Tour

10–11:30 a.m. Discover the Port City's rich past and the architectural, social and cultural history of Forest Hills and the Streetcar Suburbs including their restoration and renewal. Admission: $10. Temple Baptist Church, 1801 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.

Saturday Gourmet Food Tour

Behind-the-scenes tour of downtown Wilmington's tastiest and most unique restaurants. Admission: $50–75. Riverwalk, Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (919) 237-2254 or www.tastecarolina.com.

Sunday Grooves in the Grove

5 p.m. Evening concerts on the plantation lawn featuring a raffle and the Catch Food Truck. 10/5: Doug Irving Quartet; 10/12: Mac and Juice Quartet; 10/19: Possum Creek Bluegrass Band; 10/26: The Wooden Steel Band. Admission: Free. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org.

Sunday Historic Marketplace

10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Downtown marketplace featuring some of the finest arts and crafts vendors in the Cape Fear area, plus entertainment on a rotating basis. Admission: Free. Riverfront Park, North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-0907 or www.wilmingtondowntown.com.

To add a calendar event, please contact Ashley at ashley@saltmagazinenc.com. Events must be submitted the first of the month, one month prior to the event.

Brightmore UNIVERSITY SERIES

A Diverse Program for Lifestyle Enrichment

"Sugar 101"
Presented by Ryanna Battiste, GRUB
Wednesday, October 8th at 2 p.m.
Brightmore Independent Living

Sugar is addictive, anti-nutritive and in almost everything we eat. Join us for this session and hear about the latest research regarding what sugar and artificial sweeteners do to the body, learn hidden sources of sugar (and it's many aliases) and discover how to feed your sweet tooth with nourishing, real foods. Includes a demonstration on how to make a Green Smoothie.

Fall Painting Party
Presented by Kinga Baransky, Fine Artist and Graphic Designer, www.portcityartist.com
Monday, October 13th at 2 p.m.
Brightmore Independent Living

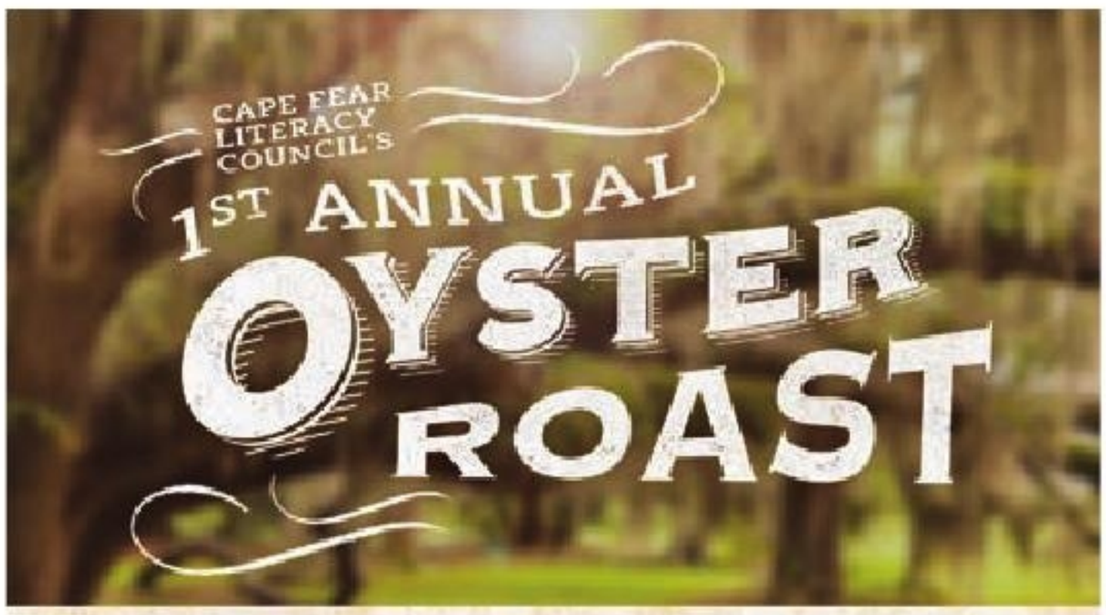
Join us and bring your favorite beverage for a Fall painting party. Paint a lovely Fall scene in under two hours with step-by-step instructions by Fine Artist and Graphic Designer Kinga Baransky. All supplies are provided.

"Life Care Funding": How to Convert Life Insurance into Long-Term Care Benefits
Presented by Tom Pechar of Synergy Home Care
Monday, October 20th at 3 p.m.
The Kempton at Brightmore

Learn why instead of surrendering your life insurance policy or allowing it to lapse, you may want to convert it into an irrevocable Benefit Account that will make monthly payments directly to a home care company for in-home care or to assisted living or skilled nursing for senior care. It's not a loan, no costs or obligations apply, there are no wait periods, no care restrictions, and no premium payments.

Reserve your seat for these FREE events by calling 910.350.1980.

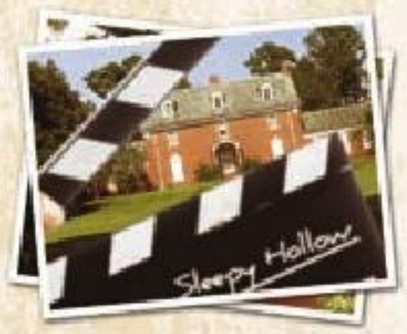
Brightmore of Wilmington
2324 South 41st Street, Wilmington | 910.350.1980
www.brightmoreofwilmington.com



SATURDAY
NOVEMBER
8TH
- GATES OPEN -
4:30 PM

AT:
CLARENDON PLANTATION
A gorgeous, historic, waterfront rice plantation and filming location for TV's ***Sleepy Hollow***

COME JOIN US FOR:
OYSTERS, ALL THE FIXIN'S, MUSIC, LIBATIONS AND MORE!

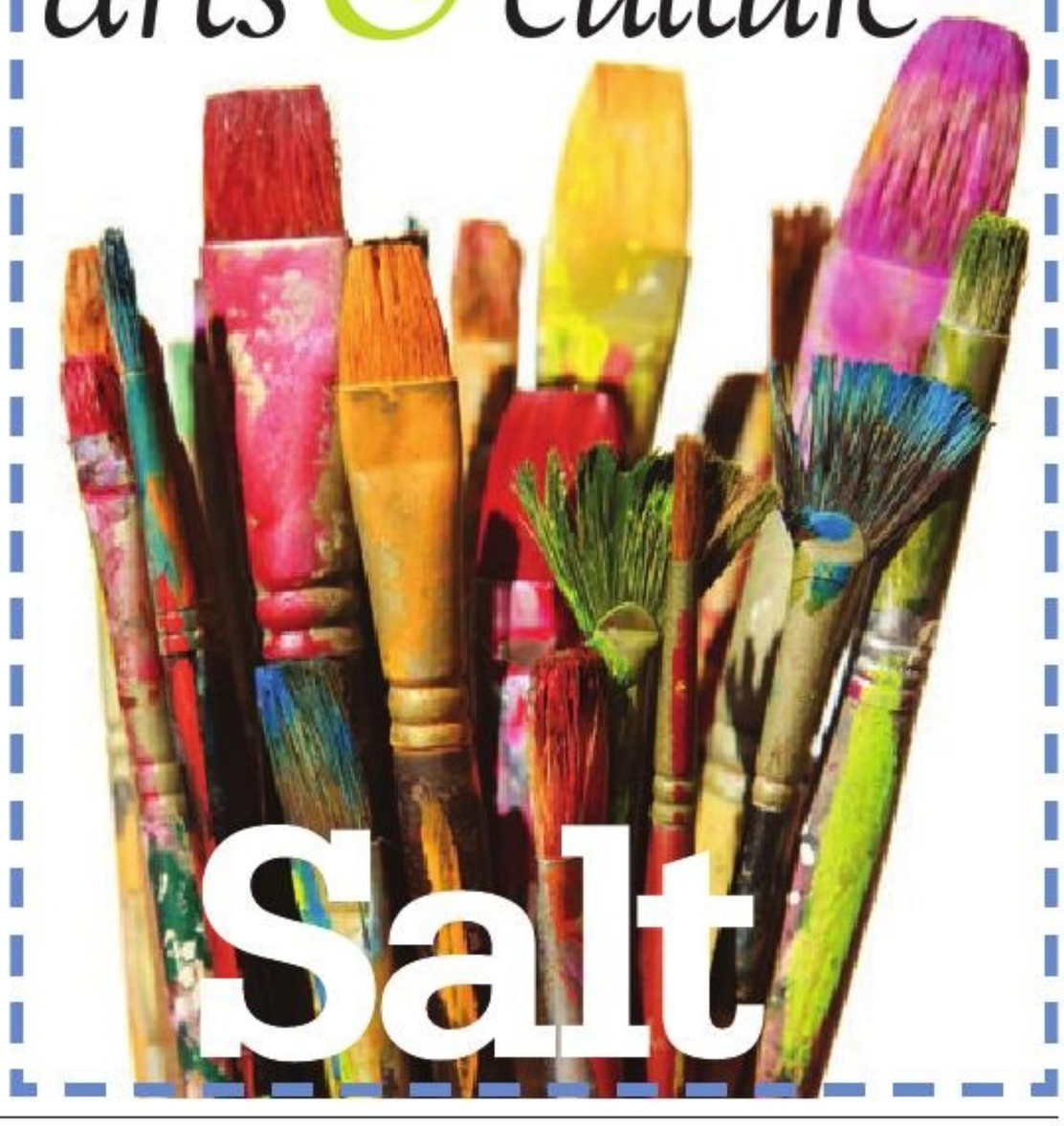


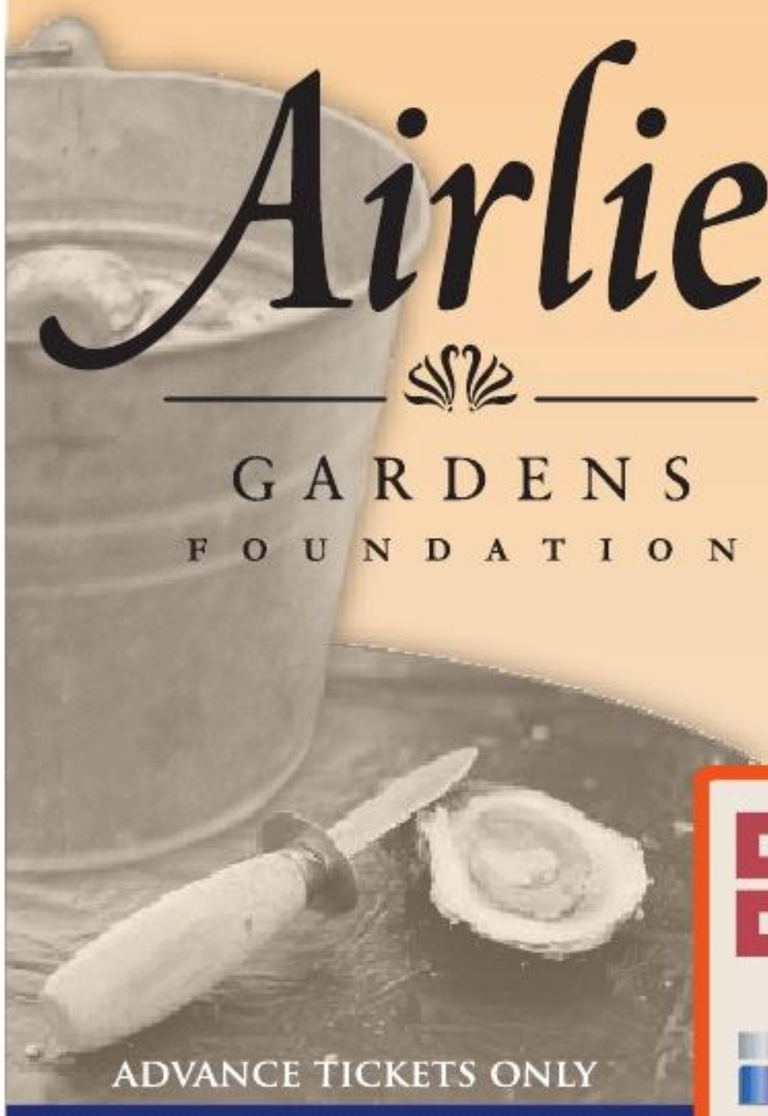
TICKETS: $80/$150 PER COUPLE
CALL: **(910) 251-0911**
OR VISIT: **CFLITERACY.ORG**

DIRECTIONS: 2260 River Road SE, just a few minutes outside of Wilmington on Hwy 133

Cape Fear CFLC LiteracyCouncil
Opening Doors, Changing Lives

arts & culture





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2014 Harvest Luncheon

Tuesday, October 21, 2014 11:00-12:30

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Wilmington, NC 28403

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Music by Mr. David Hervey

Info & Registration:

www.WARMnc.org, 910-399-7563

There is no cost to attend

Coastal Entrepreneur Awards 2014 Award Winner

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Art in the Arboretum -- October 3-5

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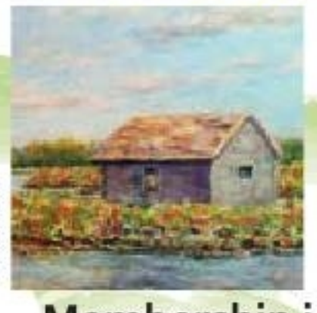
Gale Smith

Amber Whittington

Elaine Cooper

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Children's Production of *The Witch, the Troll, and the Harry Man* directed by Gina Gambony

Original Play by Gwenyfar Rohler Based on *Death Bed: The Bed That Eats!*

Thursday-Sunday, see website for details

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N.C. WRITER'S Notebook

By Sandra Redding

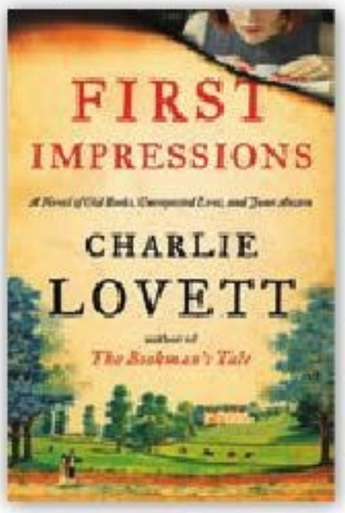
October is crisp days and cool nights, a time to curl up around the dancing flames and sink into a good book.
– Poet William Bliss Carman

Literary Events

October 18 (Saturday, 9 a.m.). 2014 Press 53/*Prime Number Magazine* Gathering of Writers, Community Arts Café, Winston-Salem. Poetry and fiction workshops led by Kim Church, Wendy J. Fox, David Jauss, David James Poissant, Kevin Morgan Watson and Lee Zacharias. Info: (336) 770-5353 or www.press53.com/GatheringofWriters.html.

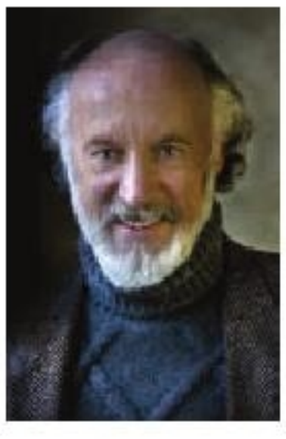
October 29 (Monday, 7 p.m.). Margaret Maron, popular mystery writer, presents "Women of Mystery," Virginia Dare Room, Alumni House, UNCG, Greensboro. Info: www.margaretmaron.com/events/

November 3 (Monday, 7 p.m.). Ernest Cline, author of the wildly futuristic *Ready Player One*, Burney Center, UNC Wilmington. This reading/discussion culminates SYNERGY, the University's Common Writing Experience. Providing an opportunity for self-reflection, critical thinking and intellectual engagement, students and faculty read and incorporate ideas spurred by readings into courses and activities. Tickets: uncw.edu/presents/UNCWPresentsErnestCline.html.



November 6 (Thursday, 5 p.m.). Charlie Lovett, rare book lover and antiquarian authority, discusses and reads from his novel *First Impressions: A Novel of Old Books, Unexpected Love and Jane Austen*. The Country Bookshop, Southern Pines, www.thecountrybookshop.biz.

November 8 (Saturday, 9 p.m.). Workshop on Creating Characters, sponsored by Writers' Group of the Triad (WGOT), Rowe Library, Holy Trinity Church, Greensboro. Led by author/creative writing teacher Abigail DeWitt, this all-day session includes lecture, discussion and in-class writing. WGOT members: $35; nonmembers: $50. Info: triadwriters.org/calendar/.

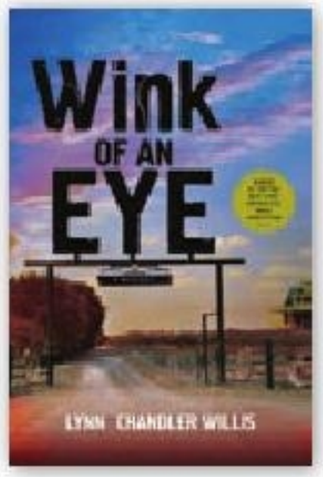


November 21–23. North Carolina Writers' Network (NCWN) 2014 Fall Conference, Sheraton Charlotte Hotel, Charlotte. Faculty includes Allan Gurganus (keynote speaker), Wilton Barnhardt, Aaron Gwyn, Morri Creech, Chantel Acevedo, Ed Williams, Robert Inman, Moir Crone, Rebecca McClanahan, Anthony S. Abbott, Cynthia Lewis, Alan Michael Parker, Kim Boykin, Zelda Lockhart and many other poets, writers, editors and agents. Info: ncwriters.org.

A poet is a person who manages, in a lifetime of standing out in thunderstorms, to be struck five or six times.
– Randall Jarrell

Awards and Contests

The North Carolina Poetry Society has announced the winners of the 2014 Randall Jarrell Poetry Competition: Melissa Hassard, Kathryn Kirkpatrick and Maureen Sherbondy. Charmaine Cadeau and Susan Laughter Meyers won the Brockman-Campbell Book Awards.



Wink of an Eye, by Lynn Chandler Willis, was named Best PI Novel Award by St. Martin's Press/Private Eye Writers of America. This spine-tingling mystery will be released on November 18.

Writers, prepare manuscripts now to submit to NCWN's prestigious 2015 competitions:

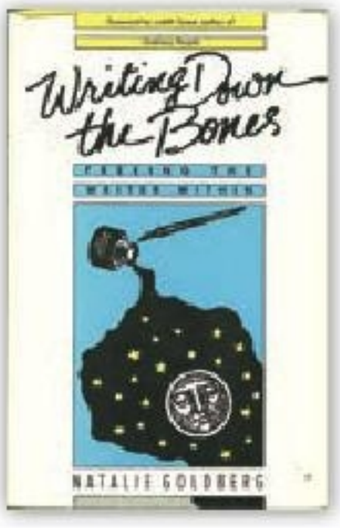
- The Rose Post Creative Nonfiction Competition (submissions December 1 to January 30).
- Thomas Wolfe Fiction Prize (submissions December 1 to January 30).
- Doris Betts Fiction Prize (submissions January 1 to February 15).

Writing Lesson

I try to create sympathy for my characters, then turn the monsters loose. – Steven King

Celebrate Halloween by writing about the ghosts haunting your hometown. Ambrose Bierce described them as "the outward and visible sign of an inward fear." Evidently there's a great deal of *fear* in North Carolina, for every county lays claim to three or four phantoms.

Apparently many are bookish. One hangs out in the New Hanover County Library in Wilmington; others frighten students attending UNCG and Greensboro College. My own favorite is a murdered orphan girl who lurks around Randolph County – and in my novel.



To create your opus, use Natalie Goldberg's method described in her classic, *Writing Down the Bones*. Write without stopping to make corrections; keep putting words on the page until your subconscious wakes up and creativity jumpstarts your brain. Revise only after the words cool down.

According to Philip Gerard, author and professor at UNCW, "Nobody writes a book. What you write everyday is a piece of a book. A fragment, a scene."

If you prefer reading, visit a bookstore near you. Those fine folks will help you locate tales to send chills down your spine. Some may be having Halloween celebrations. Ask if you can read your own spooky story. The stage fright will be many times greater than anything spooks on Halloween can dish out.

And do keep me updated on literary events and costumes at sanredd@eathlink.net.

Greensboro writer Sandra Redding's "ghost" novel, Naomi Wise: A Cautionary Tale, *is a riveting story about heartbreak and hope in a Quaker Community.*

Port City People

Last Call for White Pants Gala

Coastline Convention Center

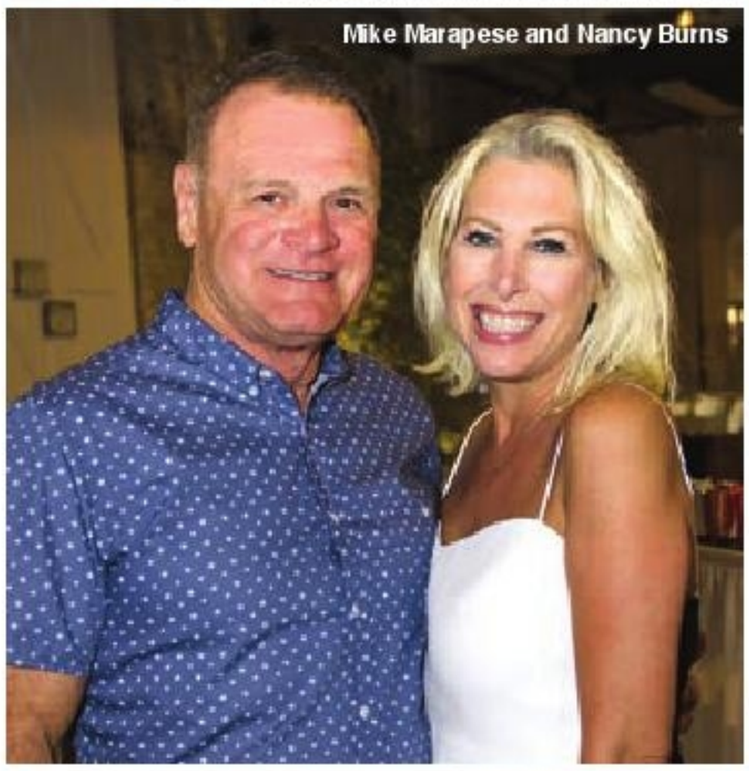
Friday, August 29, 2014

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Natalie Davis and Phil Clark

Nancy Stevens, Melissa Pollock, Stanley Fersinger

Amy & Jay Witmer


Mike Marapese and Nancy Burns

Donna Hickman, Ashley Miller, Terri Young, Cathy Luna

Jane Birnbach and Gale Smith

Wendy Reavis, Kelly Thomas, Elizabeth Jackso

Alex & Danis Smith, Sandy & Don Spiers

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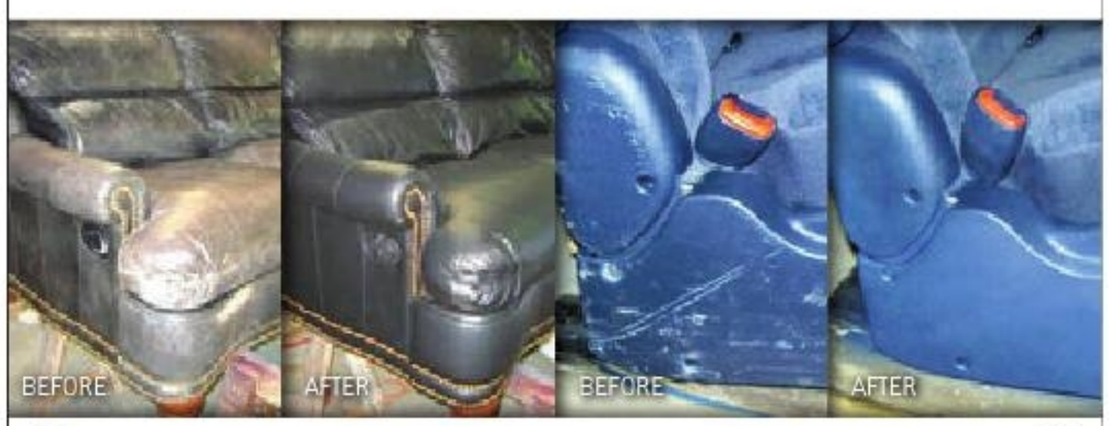

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Port City People

15th Annual Landfall Foundation Art Show

Juried Awards Reception
Wednesday, August 20, 2014
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Anita Jacques

Gale Smith

Jenny McKinnon Wright, Chris Morgan, Bill Hamlett

Janet Sessoms, Sandy Nelson

Jennifer Mishoe

Chip Hemmingway

Jessica Spencer, John & Lynda Turpin

Bring It Downtown

the Junior League of Raleigh presents the 30th annual
a Shopping spree!
shopping made joyously simple.
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JUNIOR LEAGUE OF RALEIGH
October 30 – November 2, 2014
Raleigh Convention Center
Find gifts for everyone on your holiday list!
Tickets $10 in advance, $12 at the door
www.ashoppingspree.org

Port City People

"Making Miracles Happen"
Cornhole Tournament benefiting the
Miracle League of Wilmington
Saturday, August 9, 2014
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Jason Ackerman, Joel Katzenberger, Nick Paul, Shaun Kiviat, Jimmy Hart, Stacy Moore

Ben Nobles, Christy Shultz, Brian Baker, Alex Goss, Harrison Holt, Annie Orchard, Rick Fields

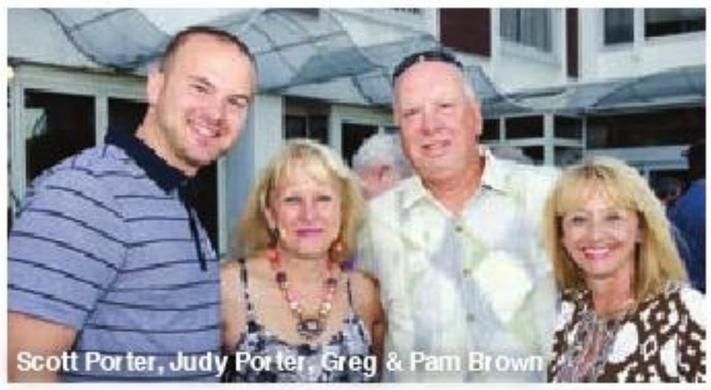
Kacey Wrench, Alice Cox, Caitlyn Brecka, Jenn Segar, Ben England

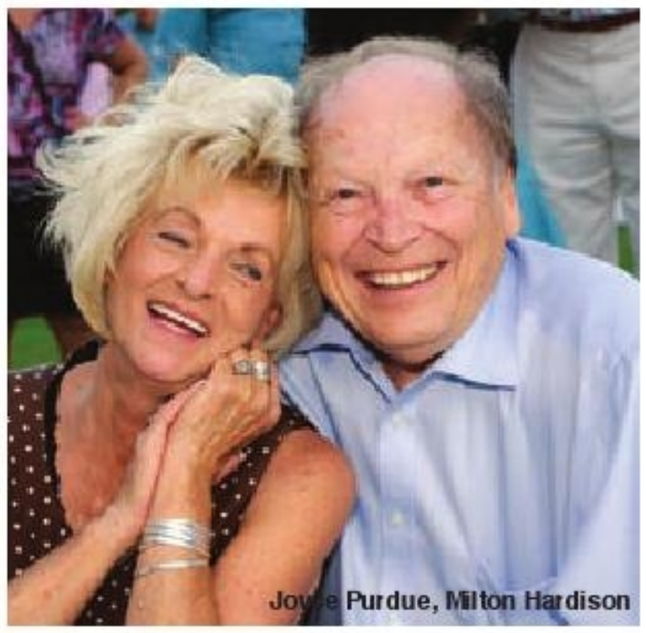
Jaren Arellano, Kristen McKnight, Ryan Floyd, Miles Brew
front: Mike Cross, Brandon Bolin, Emmett Lunceford

Bradley Cohen, Ed Manning, Levi Bradburn, Chris Tomlinson, Zack Lesake
girls: Candace Ganus, Katie Marquez, Candice Loft

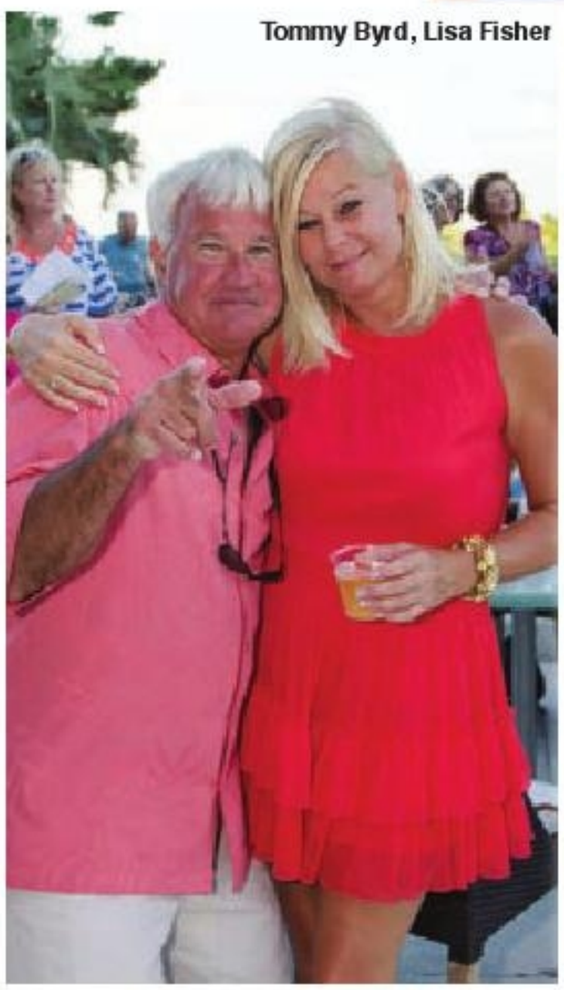
Port City People

18th Lumina Daze
Wrightsville Beach
Sunday, August 24, 2014
Photographs by Bill Ritenour


Scott Porter, Judy Porter, Greg & Pam Brown


Joyce Purdue, Milton Hardison

Timothy & Teri Brock


Tommy Byrd, Lisa Fisher

The Imitations

Mary Jo & Jim Hundley

Janice Kinghoff, Shirley Levine

October Spice

Better go grab your chili pepper and prepare to self-medicate

By Astrid Stellanova

Libras, you run the gamut from Kim Kardashian to Mahatma Gandhi, keeping Astrid on the tippy top of her twinkling toes. Star Children, give October a shout-out. How come, you ask? It's National Chili, Pizza, Seafood, Cookie and Dessert Month. And you'll know why: We will all self-medicate with comfort food 'cause this retrograde is a doozie.

Libra (September 23–October 22)
National Pizza Month? Sounds like a federal holiday to you, Libra. I know in your heart of hearts you are hoping you get one of them remote-controlled drones for your birthday, so you can have it deliver pizza right to your Barcalounger. But it is going to be a busy month with Mercury in retrograde. You will feel foxier than normal, and be more dazzling than a moon rock. Your intuition will make you more insightful than usual, and you'll find yourself being a magnet for others. Romance is in your chart and a tighter relationship for those who are already in relationships. Money won't be hard to find – get the deluxe pizza with everything.

Scorpio (October 23–November 21)
A Scorpio walks into a bar and sits down by himself and talks to nobody but Johnnie Walker about nothing. Is that your life script? It ain't too late to change it. Lonely? I reckon so. You keep everything very, very down low, and then wonder why you ain't got anybody to share your sorrows. People are attracted to you, and write all this off to mysteriousness. If somebody slides onto the stool beside you, flash that million dollar smile. The lunar and solar eclipses in your sign this month mean you can broker power.

Sagittarius (November 22–December 21)
Last month threw you into some kind of cosmic cosmetic panic. I get that – I'm a hairdresser. But you've still got your looks, and most of your own teeth. Square those shoulders and suck in your gut. It don't cost much to whiten your teeth and bleach your underwear. Opportunity is knocking, but you just don't know it – and tidy whities are always a plus with the ladies. Important dates for you are October 8 and 23. The lunar eclipse will mean sweeping changes.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19)
If your life was a movie, the title would be *Astrophysicist in Love*. Too analytical to know it, and too besotted with yourself to come on down to Earth. You're a big one to research everything; but pay attention to what you already have going on in your Earth lab, and don't get distracted. You are going to have double the energy you've normally got, and until the 23rd, you will find relationships more bewildering than usual.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18)
In the pool of life, you have been clinging to the side in the shallow end – wearing water wings and a life vest and clutching the raft. Snap out of it! Your career has a positive vortex area you can swim to mid-month; take advantage of your cautious instincts when the astral chart shifts into retrograde this month on the 4th. By the 10th you will be able to relaunch yourself. You may find yourself able to relate ideas better than normal. But don't slack off – just don't let fear overtake you.

Pisces (February 19–March 20)
Life gave you lemons and you made lasagna, which means you did not follow the recipe, Honey Child. Have you backed up your phone or your files? Do that. Then, don't worry so much, cause it ain't no use. Venus will be in Libra until the 23rd. You will be a little more emotional than usual – but don't drink and dial. Ask the Universe for a little help; astral operators are standing by and will listen if you don't slur your words.

Aries (March 21–April 19)
If you are first in line, you might be in the alpha test group. Does that ever get old? Being an early adopter of every newfangled thing is not getting you to nirvana. If you don't have a budget, try one on for size before the last Mercury retro hits October 4. This is one of those uh-oh kind of cosmic sneezes that could muck up your life like a soggy tissue until the 25th, but it ain't nothing you can't handle.

Taurus (April 20–May 20)
Two bulls are on a hillside; the young one wants to race down and make sweet love to a cow below. Part of the beauty of having Taurus strength is just knowing when to mosey on down the hill. You will have supernatural charms this month. But don't get cocky, because it is entirely possible you could stick your size 9s in your mouth in a very big way, so it is best you check that tendency to be such a cheeky beast. If you haven't had a makeover lately, take yourself to the cosmetics counter and get a free boost.

Gemini (May 21–June 20)
Your chart is divided in half. Think Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Rawhide. You flip back and forth without much warning to nobody. This means that the last Mercury retrograde of good ole 2014 is especially hard on you. You are naturally prone to slip-sliding and this causes nearly everybody but your sweet thing to stay waaay on back. When Mercury enters Libra on the 25th, you and everybody else can exhale and get a teensy bit closer.

Cancer (June 21–July 22)
When you disconnected your land line, you thought all your problems were over. Well, somebody from the past is going to reach out by letter. Go to the post office. You might a' won something. Maybe an old pal left you something. But here's a little caution sign: It is one of those months that will require all your skills. Just when you make plans, life is going to change them. Don't get too flapped; and don't plan serious travel – the flights will get changed, the reservation crossed, the Buick won't crank. Sorry. But nobody gets killed, so just deal.

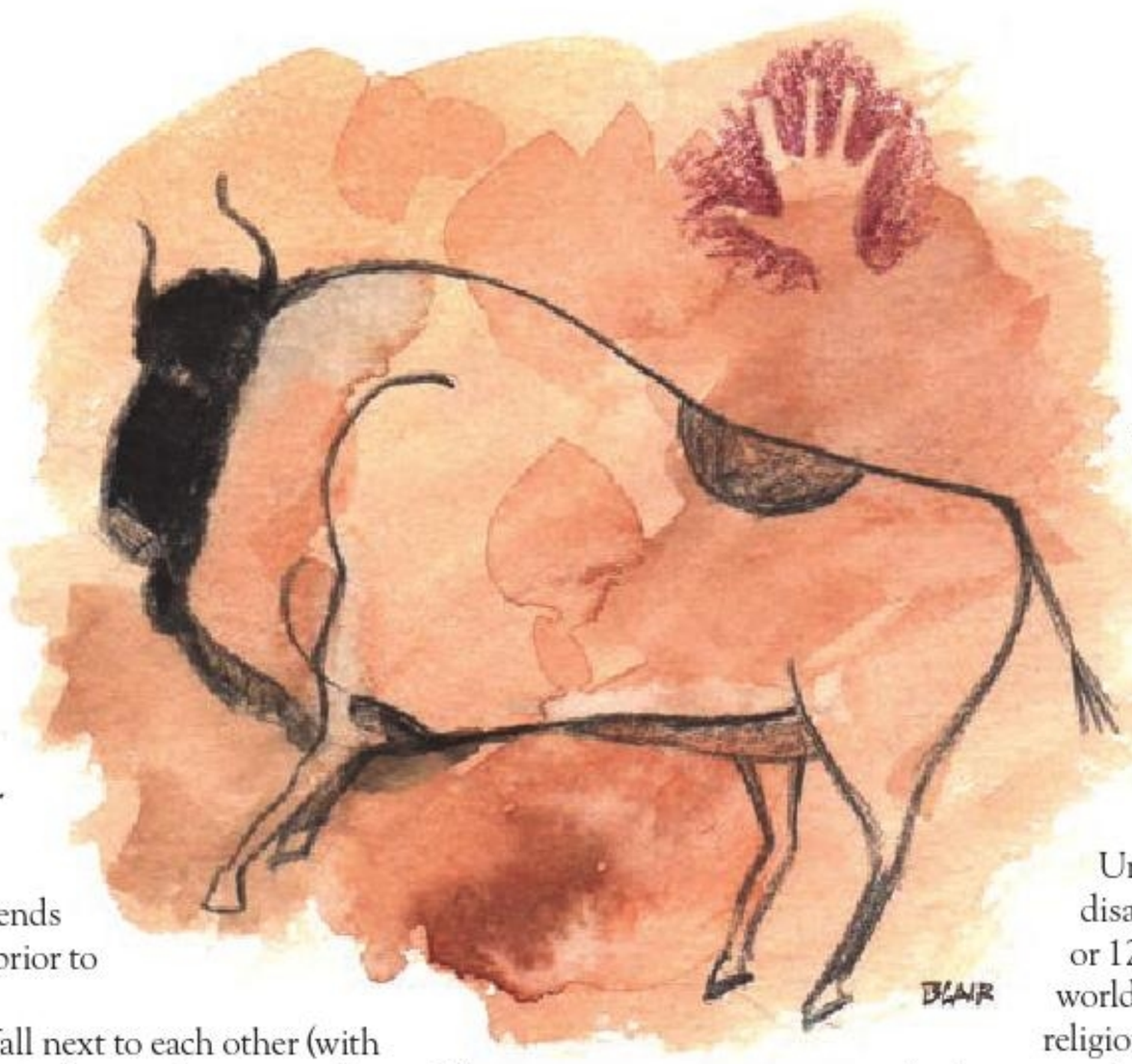
Leo (July 23–August 22)
Must you tell everything on Facebook? Bust on out of that virtual life you've been living and get off that virtual farm, or SimsVille, or wherever it is you've been. Somebody's snooping into your business, so keep your ears perked and your eyes open. Your best bet is to spend more time in the great outdoors, making friends with Mother Nature. She is planning a big old retrograde that will keep you shook up until the 23rd. After that will be a huge shift, and a big relief.

Virgo (August 23–September 22)
Pull in to the next rest stop and get a free map. You do not have to navigate all of life's mysteries alone. Christopher Columbus landed in America in October – without GPS. If you haven't checked your bank statements lately, take the time to back everything up and keep an eye out for business. The retrograde has some hiccups planned, so get in front of it by reviewing everything. Honey, it gets better soon – by the end of the month all Star Children get a nice reprieve.

For years, Astrid Stellanova owned and operated Curl Up and Dye Beauty Salon in the boondocks of North Carolina until arthritic fingers and her popular astrological readings provoked a new career path.

Surprising Gifts

If young imaginations are nourished and encouraged, a happier adult may result



By Clyde Edgerton

I recently stumbled upon an excerpt from *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, a book that comprises a series of 1901–1902 lectures by philosopher William James.

In lectures VI and VII James spends some time contemplating Earth — prior to us humans being on it.

Imagine a mud pile and a waterfall next to each other (with no person yet existing). James suggests that neither is more beautiful than the other. But with human beings present, things change. Individual values enter the picture.

James worries about those people living around the time of his lectures who called themselves "naturalists" — about their believing in nothing much beyond the natural world. He says, "Old age has the last word: the purely naturalistic look at life, however enthusiastically it may begin, is sure to end in sadness . . . ."

He explains:

Whatever of value, interest, or meaning our respective worlds may appear endued with are thus pure gifts of the spectator's mind. The passion of love is the most familiar and extreme example of this fact. If it comes, it comes; if it does not come, no process of reasoning can force it. Yet it transforms the value of the creature loved as utterly as the sunrise transforms Mont Blanc from a corpse-like gray to a rosy enchantment; and it sets the whole world to a new tune for the lover and gives a new issue to his [or her] life. So with fear, with indignation, jealousy, ambition, worship. If they are there, life changes . . . And as the excited interest which these passions put into the world is our gift to the world, just so are the passions themselves gifts – gifts to us, from sources sometimes low and sometimes high; but almost always non-logical and beyond our control.

Two words came to my mind after reading these sentences: children and art.

Children. A word that James uses regarding the source of gifts is "non-logical." Think about the mind of a child. Children sometimes believe we might sit on a cloud, or fly with wings to the moon, or defy time. Non-logical children can be lively and inspirational, refreshingly human. (And a source of great material for a writer.)

If young imaginations are nourished and embraced, then the chance for a child to be creative, productive and happy later in adulthood (as a parent, worker, thinker, seeker) increases dramatically.

Unfortunately, imaginative play begins disappearing in most of us at around age 11 or 12 when we begin confronting the "real" world, a world striving for certainty in politics, religion, commerce and science.

Art. James speaks also of gifts that are "beyond our control." This term moves us into the realm of the mysterious. If you think about good art — art that moves you and influences your feelings and thinking (be it writing, visual art or music), you may find that that art has in fact "deepened the mystery," as Flannery O'Connor noted. You may find an element of uncertainty that has pulled you into a kind of collaboration with the artist; and you may thus experience "the wisdom of uncertainty" that the writer Milan Kundera discusses in his book *The Art of the Novel*.

This business of non-logic and uncertainty somehow doesn't fit into the way we've set up our daily lives, does it? We have too much to sell, buy, scan, watch, wait for, go to, listen to, calculate. Our lives are full of gadgets and vehicles of all dimensions; strangers have learned to repair the gadgets we buy and then replace every year or two. The gifts James speaks of, "gifts to us, from sources sometimes low and sometimes high; but almost always non-logical and beyond our control," can seem scant these days. The seeds for those gifts — gifts of beauty and meaning — may be found in the imaginations of children and in art.

Wouldn't it be great if we humans in Wilmington and elsewhere on Earth, when confronted with public policy decisions, said in unison: "Our two most important assets, the seeds for a better way of living — for a more human and humane garden — are found in children and art?"

Clyde Edgerton is the author of ten novels, a memoir and a new work, Papadaddy's Book for New Fathers. *He is the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at UNCW.*

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